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ABSTRACT

This learning pack explains the rights guaranteed to students with learning difficulties in the Charter for Learning, which was written by and for students in the United Kingdom. The learning pack, which is intended for learning-disabled students and the staff who work with them, begins with an overview of the content of the Charter for Learning and its role as a tool for self-advocacy. Chapter 1 discusses the charter's development and shares some learning-disabled adults' comments about their rights. Chapters 2-10 discuss the rights of the learning disabled to take the following actions or to obtain the following things: choose and attend classes and have access to clear, understandable information; be able to complete a course to get a job; the right to have fun learning; have the chance to make friends and learn in a nice place; be treated as adults with respect and not be bullied; have good access, good teaching, and support; and speak up. The following items are also included: a 10-point action plan; 15 questions for managers; a list of 12 useful books and organizations; a word bank defining 43 words related to the charter; and audiotapes of the learning pack's contents. (MN)

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ED 447 322

Speaking Out
OUR RIGHTS

Our Right to Learn

A pack for people with learning difficulties and staff who work with them, based on the Charter for Learning.

Edited by Yola Jacobsen

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NIACE, the national organisation for adult learning, has a broad remit to promote lifelong learning opportunities for adults. NIACE works to develop increased participation in education and training, particularly for those who do not have easy access because of barriers of class, gender, age, race, language and culture, learning difficulties and disabilities, or insufficient financial resources.

NIACE's website on the Internet is http://www.niace.org.uk

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Foreword

The Charter for Learning is about self-advocacy in lots of areas in people's lives.

I didn't know anything about rights at all until I got involved in Speaking Up Cambridge. I've learnt that society needs to change. Things like the Charter help people think about rights, enable people and help society change.

Education is important. When I was at school the teachers couldn't be bothered to teach me. Adults with learning difficulties learn more when they go to adult education centres or college than they do at school. Learning creates opportunities to do a job or voluntary work.

The pack is useful to open up society's eyes more. It gives groups opportunities for open discussion about people with learning difficulties and their rights in schools and colleges. It brings new ideas for people with learning difficulties and also brings new ideas for bosses at education centres. Gives time for social services to think as well.

Lots of colleges haven't got lifts. Colleges don't have people with learning difficulties on the Student Union. Why not? These are the questions that need to be asked.

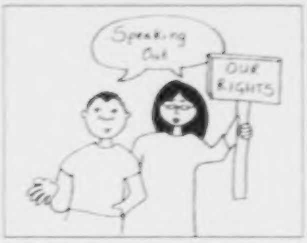
The pack and charter is a brilliant idea, I hope that service managers in particular, day centres and education services will take on board what people are saying and take note.

Eve Rank-Petruzziello

Disability Rights Commissioner and member of Speaking Up Cambridge, a self- advocacy organisation.

A Charter for Learning

Students with learning difficulties want:



The right to speak up

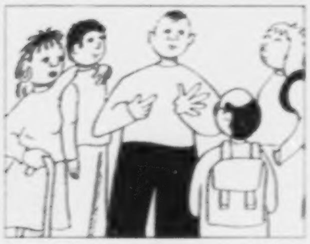
"We are adults with a voice;
we want to be heard"

The right to choose to go to classes

"We should have a say in what
we learn"

The right to have support

"Someone you can rely on to help"



The right to have the chance to make friends

"To mix with the crowd a little more
and make new friends"

The right to have fun learning

"The more you enjoy it, the more
you learn"

The right to good access

"Lifts, ramps, more room
for wheelchairs"

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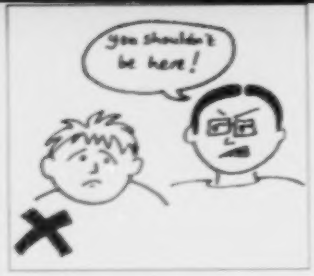
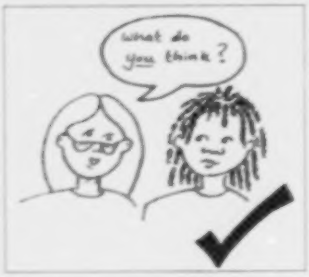
The right not to be bullied

"Cut out bullying – Everybody equal"


you shouldn't be here!

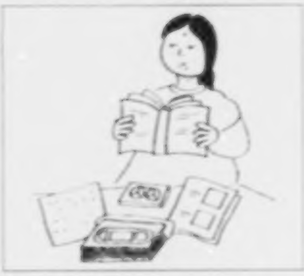
The right to be treated as adults with respect

"Talk to us like adults"


what do you think?

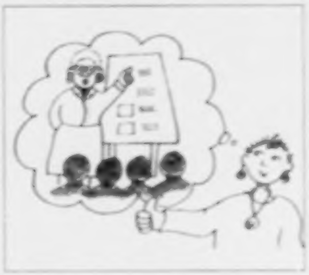
The right to have clear information that we can understand

"The information needs to be easy to understand – it is too complicated"



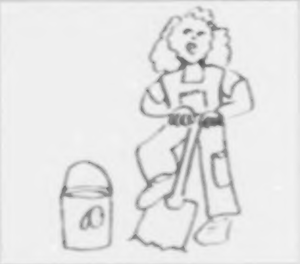
The right to have good teaching

"You need a good teacher to help you learn"



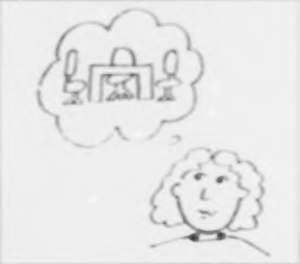
The right to be able to do a course to get a job

"To give us the skills to maybe get a job"



The right to learn in a nice place

"A place where you feel comfortable"

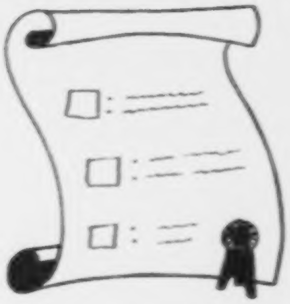


Introduction

Our Right to Learn

Our Right to Learn – A Voice for People with Learning Difficulties in Continuing Education

What is this pack about?



This pack is about the *Charter for Learning*, a charter by and for students with learning difficulties. A charter is like a very important list.

Speaking Out
OUR RIGHTS

A copy of the charter can be found at the beginning of this pack. The charter also comes as a poster from NIACE – there is a copy in the pocket at the back of the pack.

The *Charter for Learning* has twelve points. These points are what students with learning difficulties said were the twelve most important things about learning.

Each of the twelve charter points is talked about in the pack. We have used students' own words as much as possible. All the way through the pack there are comments and ideas from students.

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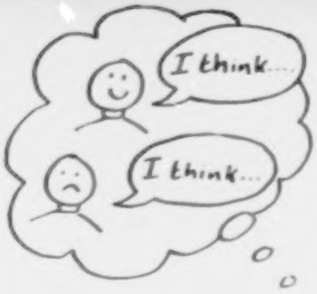
Who is this pack for?

This pack is for people with learning difficulties and staff who work with them in colleges, adult education centres, day centres, self-advocacy organisations and voluntary organisations.

Why a charter for students with learning difficulties?

Lots of colleges already have student charters. Some people wanted to know why NIACE wanted to make a different charter by and for students with learning difficulties. There are several reasons:

1. Making the charter meant that people with learning difficulties in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland had a chance to say what they think about learning and being students. This had never been done before.


I think....
I think....

2. This charter is what people with learning difficulties think is important about learning and being students.

3. The charter pack can be used by staff and students to work together to make things better for students with learning difficulties.

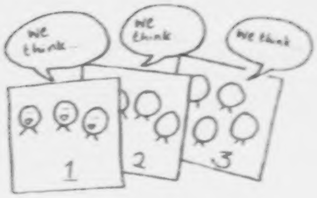
How can it be used?

You can look at the whole pack or just the chapters that interest you.

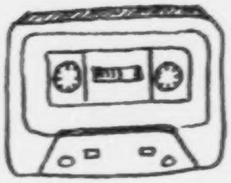
You can talk about what people with learning difficulties say in the pack.

There are questions and ideas to think about at the end of every chapter. You might want to talk about them or you might actually want to do some of the things that are described.

What is in the pack?

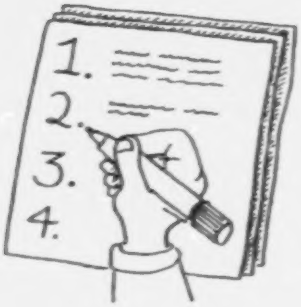


The pack tells you about what people with learning difficulties have to say about learning and being students.

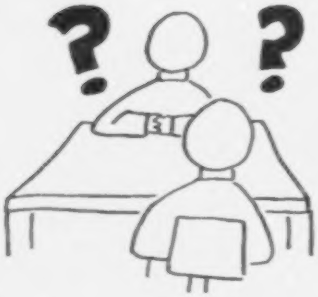


There is an audio-tape of the pack in the front of the folder.

At the back of the pack there is a word bank to explain words that are hard to understand.

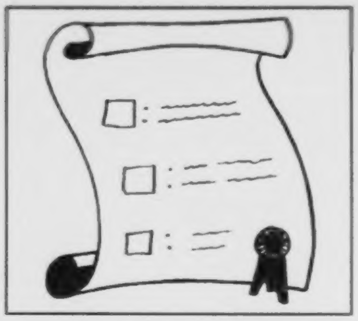


At the end of the pack there is an action plan. We hope it is useful for staff and students who are working together, to change things.



After the action plan there are some questions for managers.

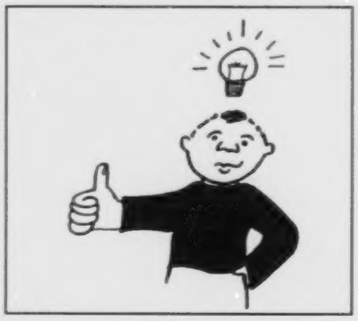
The headings used in the pack are:



Charter Point

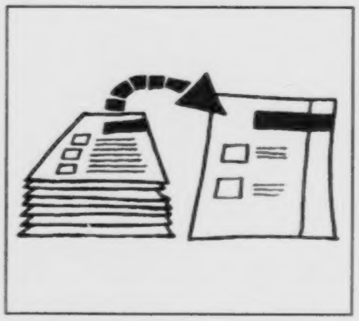
Student Comments

Ideas and comments from people with learning difficulties.



Charter ideas in action

Examples of what students with learning difficulties and staff are doing, to change things and make them better at the place where they learn.



About this chapter

This section tells you what will be talked about in the chapter.

Questions to think about

Questions for staff and students to think about.

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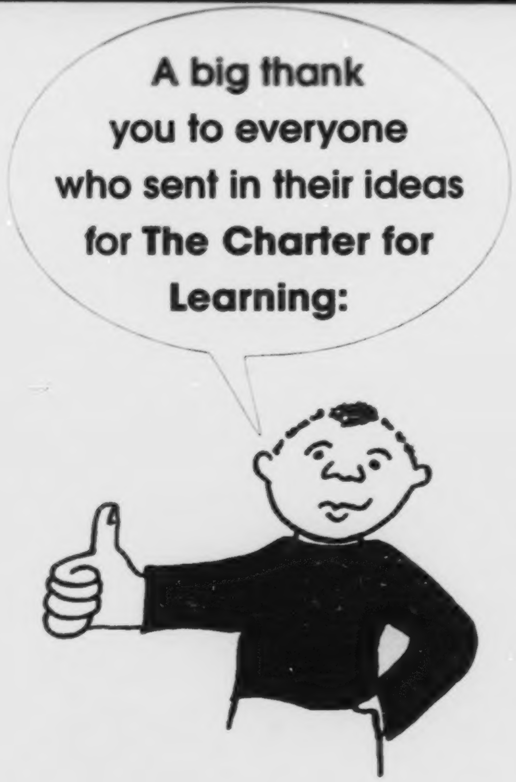
A big thank you to everyone who sent in their ideas for The Charter for Learning:

- Aberdeen College.
- The Adult College Lancaster.
- Allesley FE Centre, North West Area, Coventry Community Education.
- Arnold and Carlton College, Nottingham.
- Barnardos – Somerset Inclusion Project, Taunton.
- Barnfield College, Luton.
- Barnsley College.
- Braintree College.
- Cardonald College, Glasgow.
- Care Shangton, Shangton Leicestershire.
- Chelmsford ATC.
- City of Westminster Community Support Team.
- Codsall Day Service Self Advocacy Group, West Midlands.
- Coleg Powys.
- Connect, c/o Newcastle Day Service, Newcastle, Staffs.
- Coventry Community Education, South East Area, c/o Stoke Park School & Community Technology College.
- DART (Disability Advisory & Resource Team), Cardiff.
- Derbyshire County Council – Ashbrook Centre, Chesterfield.
- Dorset County Council, Adult Education Service.
- ENABLE – Ayr and District Branch.
- Exeter College.
- Falkirk Council – Education Services.

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- Flintshire People First, Flint.
- Gateway College, Leicester.
- Grangemouth Self Advocacy group, Community Education Unit.
- Grantham College.
- Guildford College.
- High Peak College, Buxton.
- Howardian Self Advocacy Group, Penylan, Cardiff.
- Hull College.
- Huntspill Projects, West Huntspill, Somerset.
- Ings Adult Community Centre, Hull.
- Innes Centre, Rochdale.
- Lancashire Self Advocacy Partnership, Preston.
- Leeds City Council, Dept of Community Benefits & Rights, Adult Education Unit.
- Leicester Adult Education College.
- Leicester South Fields College.
- Lewes Tertiary College.
- Linkage Community Trust, Grimsby.
- Lochaber Centre, Fort William.
- Lowestoft College.
- Manchester Adult Education Services.
- McLeod Street Centre, Edinburgh.
- Melville House Resource Centre, Bradford.
- The Meridens Resource & Activity Centre.
- Middlesbrough Borough Council - Adult Education Service.
- Mulberry Trust - Spalding / Holbeach.
- Munster West Fulham Area Centre.
- NESCOT, Epsom.
- Newcastle College.
- North & West Essex Adult Community College, Harlow.
- North Herts People First, Stevenage.
- North Lincolnshire Council Adult Education Service, Brigg.
- North Somerset Council Housing & Social Services.
- Northampton College.

- Park House Committee.
- People First – Heckmondwike SEC.
- People First of Norfolk, Norwich.
- Peterborough College of Adult Education.
- Phoenix NHS Trust, Bristol – One Step Ahead Forum.
- Elsie Millin Court Forum.
- Upham Road Forum.
- Pontypridd Adult Education Centre.
- Potternewton Centre User Group Leeds.
- Ravensbourne Health Trust, Farnborough.
- Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council.
- Richmond Adult & Community College, Twickenham.
- Rotherham College of Arts and Technology.
- Rugby College.
- Runshaw College, Leyland.
- Scarborough Training Centre. Members Committee
- Scottish Borders Council, Katharine Elliot Centre. Members' Committee, Hawick.
- Scottish Further Education Unit – Falkirk College and Langside College Glasgow.
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- SITE, the City Lit, London.
- Skills for People, Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Solihull College.
- South & East Belfast Health & Social Services Trust.
- South Tyneside College, South Shields.
- Southampton City College.
- Southend Adult Community College.
- Southwark Education, London.
- Stourbridge College.
- Swindon College Forum.
- Swindon People First.
- The Moorland Advocacy Group, Witney, Oxon.
- West Drayton Rural Activity Centre.
- West Lothian Community Education Service.

- West Oxfordshire College, Witney, Oxon.
- West Sussex County Council, Chichester.
- West Sussex Learning Links, Horsham.
- Westminster Adult Education Service.
- Weymouth College.
- Whiteinch Adult Training Centre Client Committee, Glasgow.
- Wrexham County Borough.
- Yale College.
- York City Council Community Services.
- Ystrad Mynach College.

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The Project Advisory Group

- James Bliss, Student, SITE The City Lit, London.
- Jenny Bowers (from 12/99) – Project Co-ordinator, Caring Options for Training &Work, Devon.
- Andy Burgen – Principal, Lancashire College.
- Gavin Macgregor (until 10/99) North of England Manager, Carers National Association.
- Robert Must – Student, SITE The City Lit, London.
- Sally Palmer – (from 6/99) Parent carer and lecturer in Learning Support, Reading College and School of Arts and Design.
- Kit Roberts – Executive Principal, Mencap.
- Shirley Sievewright – Parent carer.
- Madeleine Starr – Project Co-ordinator, Action for Carers and Employment, Surrey, from 1/2000 Project Manager, Carers and Employment, Carers National Association.
- Barbara Waters – Chief Executive, Skill, The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities.

The Charter Advisory Group

- Students and staff at the FEDA workshop – Entry Level Curriculum and Awards for Students with Learning Difficulties held in Manchester, June 14th 1999.
- Tracey Curran, Carole Ann Stock, Sonia Hollis, Joanne Scott, Tina Barret – Northampton College.
- Caroline Gleadall, Lee Kissack , Corrine Knight – Rotherham College of Arts and Technology.
- Swindon People First.

NIACE Staff

- Anne Agius – office and administration work.
- Yola Jacobsen – who wrote the words for the book and was project co-ordinator.
- Peter Lavender – advice on the book and charter.
- Alyson Malach – advice on the book and charter.
- Virman Man – publishing advice.
- Jeannie Sutcliffe – advice, support and ideas throughout the project.
- Cheryl Turner – advice on the book and charter.

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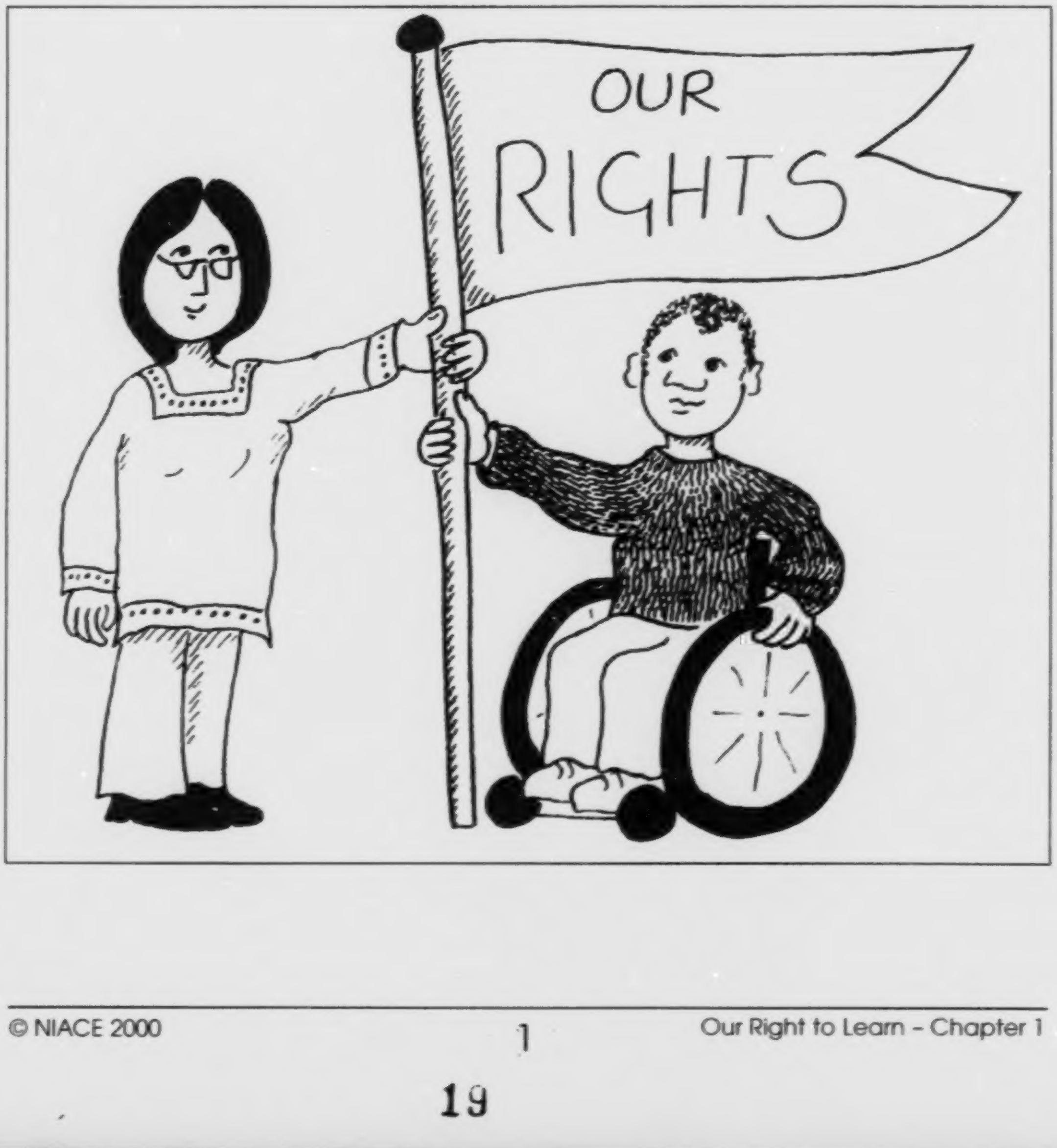
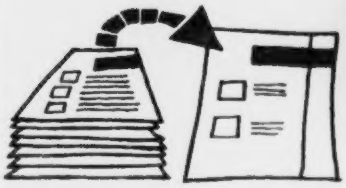
Chapter 1

Rights





About this chapter

Rights

This chapter looks at how the charter was made and what people with learning difficulties have to say about rights.

Rights and the Charter

- The Charter for Learning is a list of rights for students with learning difficulties.
- Rights are about what people want to do in their lives and how they want to be treated.
- People with learning difficulties sent their ideas to NIACE about what they thought should be in the Charter for Learning.
- Thinking about the charter gave some students and staff ideas about how to change things and make them better.

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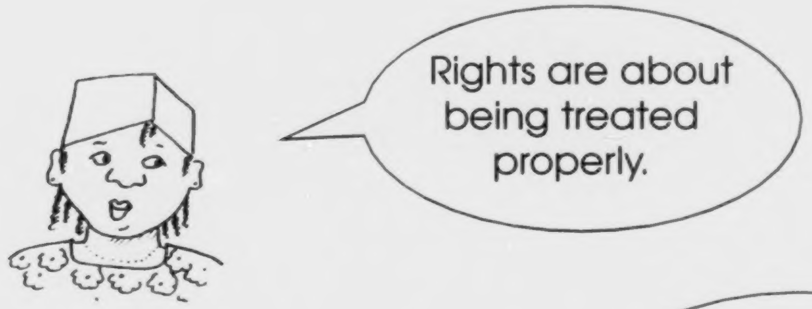
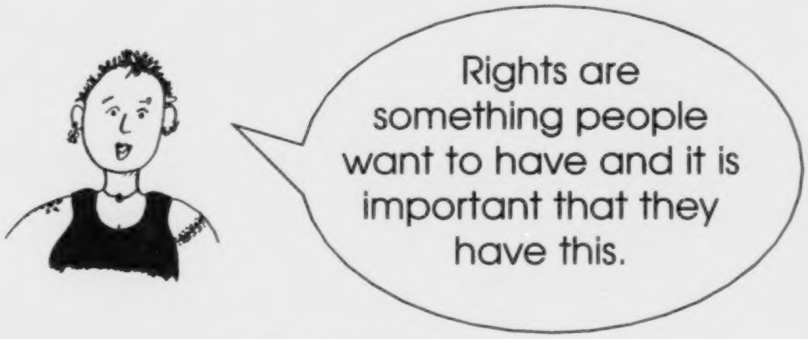
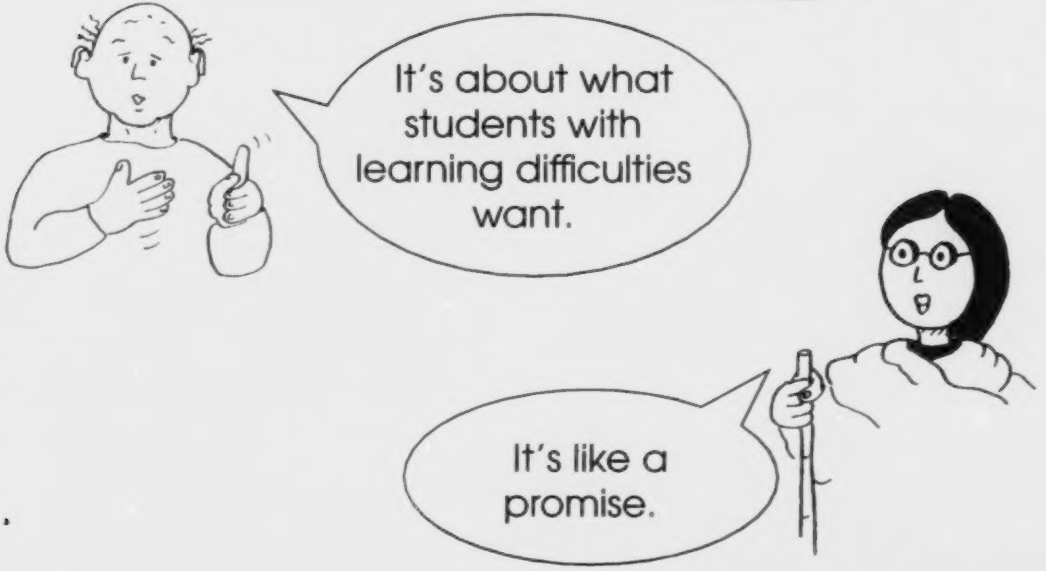
The Charter for Learning

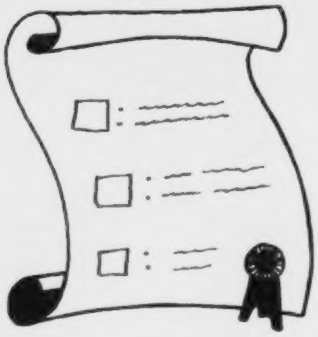
The **Charter for Learning** is a list of rights for students with learning difficulties. Rights are about what people want to do in their lives and how they want to be treated. It is very important that people have rights so they can be treated equally.


Rights are about being treated properly.


Rights are something people want to have and it is important that they have this.


It's about what students with learning difficulties want.
It's like a promise.

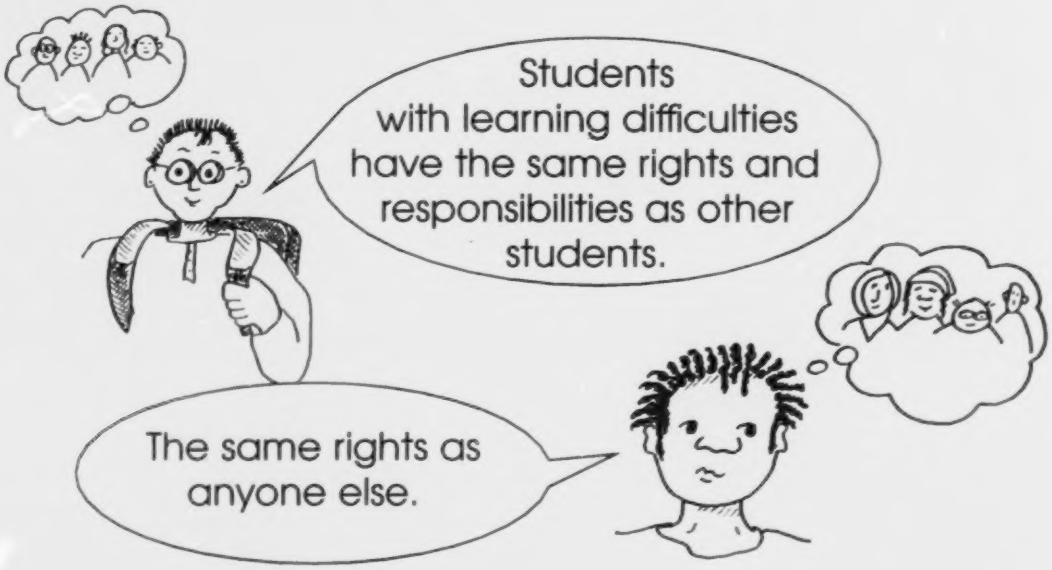
© NIACE 2000



The twelve charter points are all rights that students with learning difficulties want to have. They are about what students with learning difficulties want to do and how they want to be treated.

Lots of people with learning difficulties sent their ideas for the Charter for Learning to NIACE. One of the questions that NIACE asked them was:

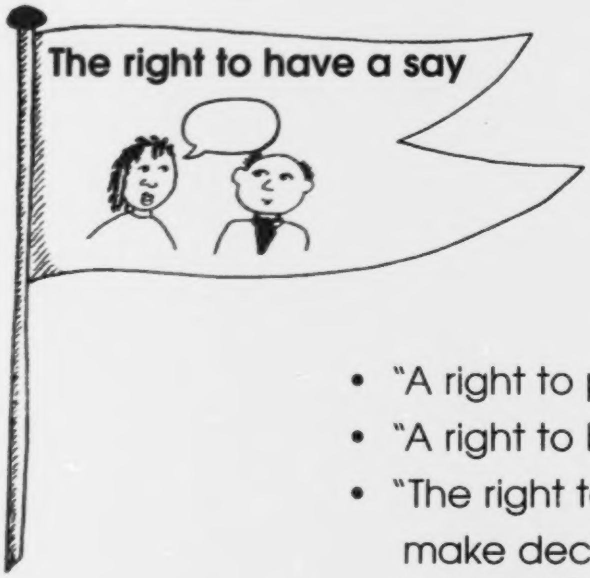
What rights do you think students with learning difficulties should have?


Students with learning difficulties have the same rights and responsibilities as other students.
The same rights as anyone else.

As well as the twelve points on the charter, there are other rights that people with learning difficulties think are important to have.

Student comments

Students with learning difficulties want:


The right to have a say

- "A right to put views forward."
- "A right to be heard."
- "The right to speak out and make decisions."
- "The right to explain your feelings over matters that concern you."
- "A right to be asked."
- "The right to have a say about what we want to do in life."

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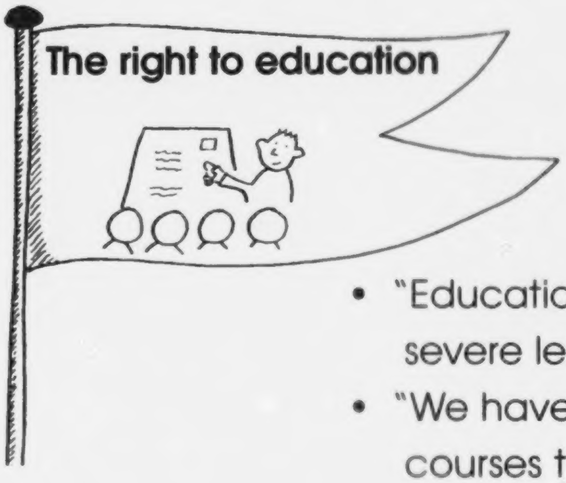
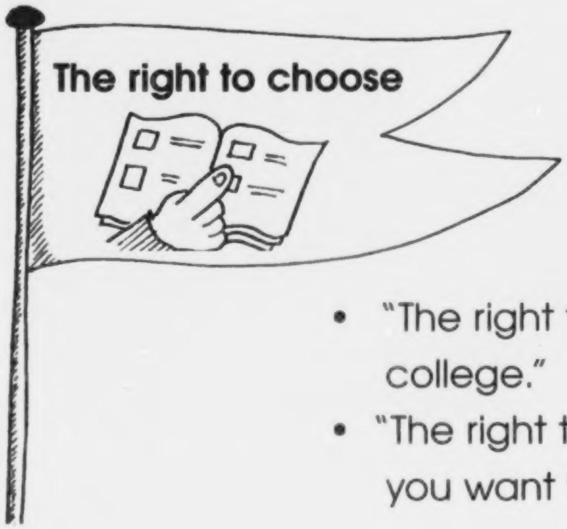
The right to be respected

- "To be seen to be like others."
- "To be treated properly."
- "To be treated equally."

The right to education

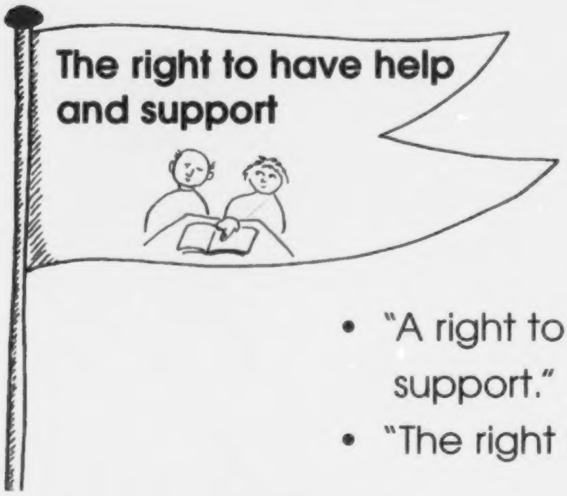


- "Education for all, for people with severe learning difficulties as well."
- "We have the right to go on courses that we understand."
- "Courses at different levels, easy and not too easy."
- "To learn to read."
- "A right not to be bored."
- "The right to see results after student evaluations."



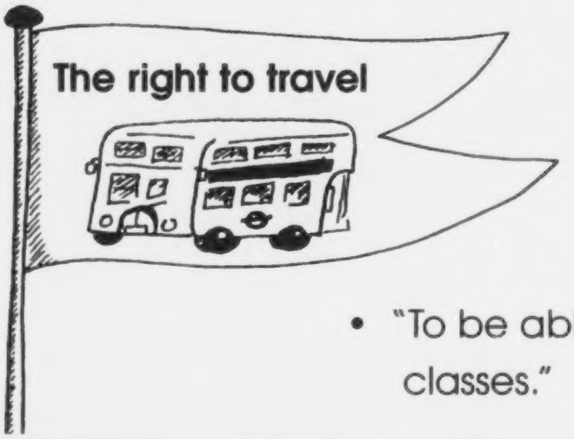
The right to choose

- "The right to choose to come to college."
- "The right to work individually if you want to."



The right to have help and support

- "A right to guidance and support."
- "The right to help to do things."



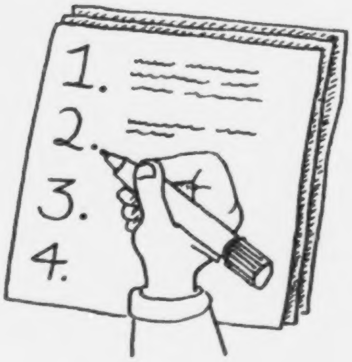
The right to travel

- "To be able to get to college for classes."

Making the Charter

NIACE sent out a letter and tape asking people with learning difficulties what they thought was important about learning and being students. Over one hundred adult education centres, colleges, day centres, user groups and People First groups in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland sent their ideas back to NIACE. These ideas were used to write the charter and the book.

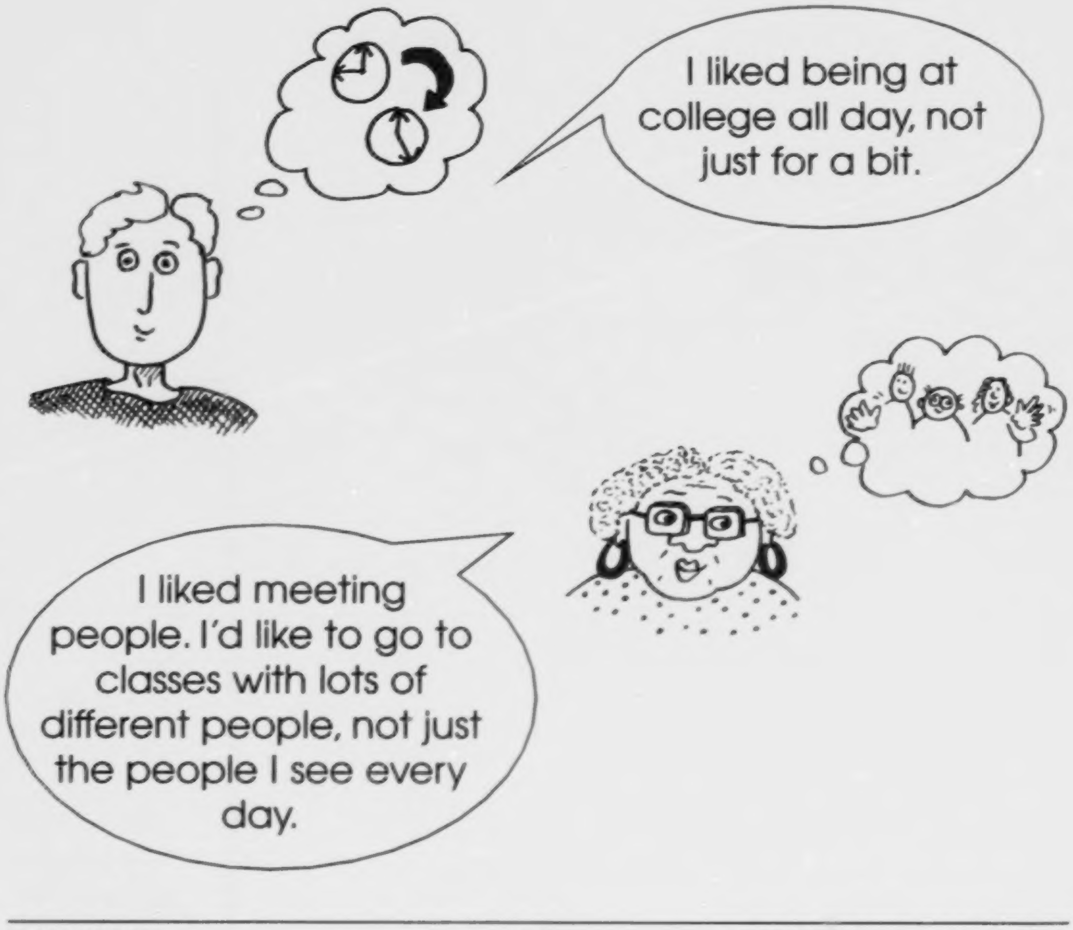
Here are some examples of the ways people thought about the charter and sent their information to NIACE.

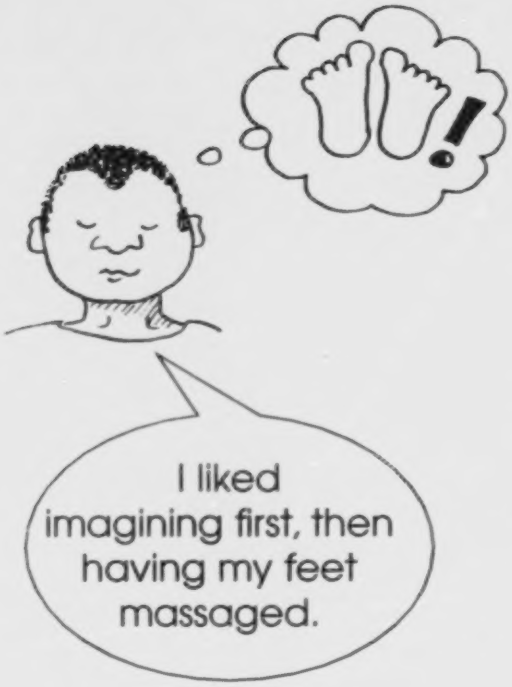


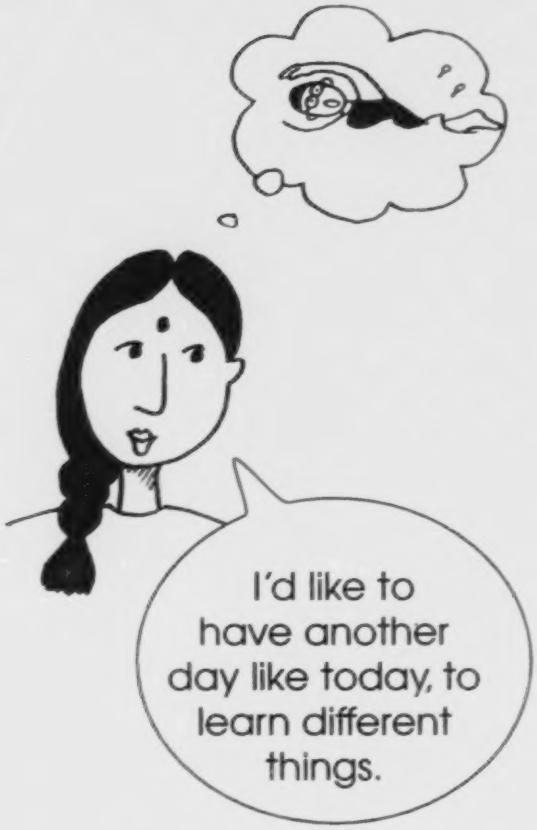
Students on the Vocational Skills Course at **Coleg Powys** asked other students what points they thought should be in a Students' Charter. Then they put together a list of the points that people thought were the most important for the **Charter for Learning** and sent it to NIACE.

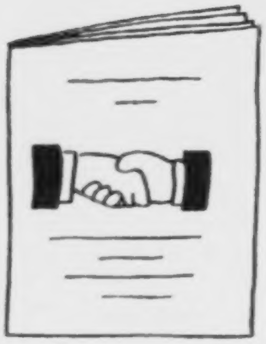
North & West Essex Adult Community College ran a "Have a Say about Learning Day". Some new students came to the day, as well as people who were already students at the college. During the day there was a chance to try out sessions in First Aid, Art, Photography and Reflexology. They sent NIACE a video, photos and a report about the day. This is what some of the students had to say about the day and about learning:

Report
VIDEO


I liked being at college all day, not just for a bit.
I liked meeting people. I'd like to go to classes with lots of different people, not just the people I see every day.


I liked imagining first, then having my feet massaged.


I'd like to have another day like today, to learn different things.



Students on the Self Advocacy course at **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** thought about the charter and decided to make a handbook for staff. The book is about how the students wanted to be treated. The students sent a copy of the handbook to NIACE for information for the **Charter for Learning**.

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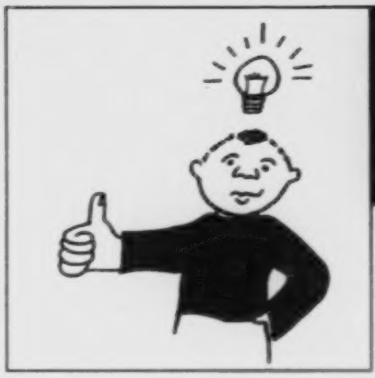
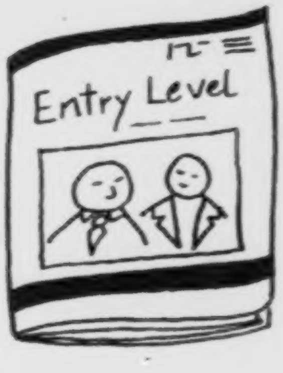


Charter ideas in action

Talking about the **Charter for Learning** gave some students and staff ideas about how to change things and make them better.

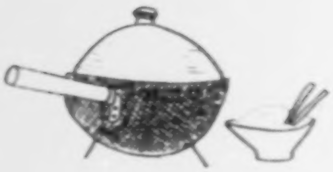
Students and staff at **Northampton College** made a photo prospectus so students could understand the information about courses.



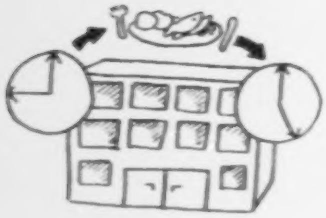
After the "Have a Say about Learning Day" at **North & West Essex Adult Community College** staff thought and talked about:

- Some students liking smaller classes rather than bigger ones
- More taster courses to help students choose their classes
- The cost of courses and what students can and cannot afford

- Transport and how difficult it is for students to go to courses in the evening and at the weekend.



- Making sure students learn useful skills in a subject like cooking which they can use at home.



- The importance of feeling part of the college – having lunch and staying all day.

Questions to think about

Students

What do you think about the twelve rights on the **Charter for Learning**?

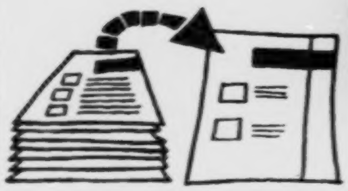
Which point do you think is most important?

Staff and Students

How can staff and students work together to make the charter rights happen where they learn?

Chapter 2

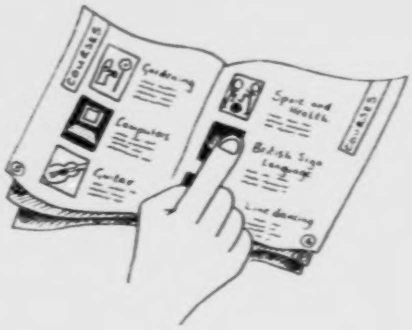
Deciding to go to college



About this chapter

Deciding to go to college

This chapter looks at what students with learning difficulties have to say about choosing their classes and having clear and easy to understand information.


Courses
Gardening
Computers
Guitar
Sport and Health
British Sign Language
Line dancing
Courses

The right to choose to go to classes

"We should have a say in what we learn"

- People with learning difficulties want to make their own choices about going to classes and what they learn.
- Sometimes it is helpful if tutors, support workers or parents help people choose, but it is not helpful when they tell them what to do.
- Some people want to go to courses in the summer holidays.

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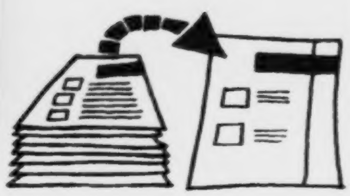
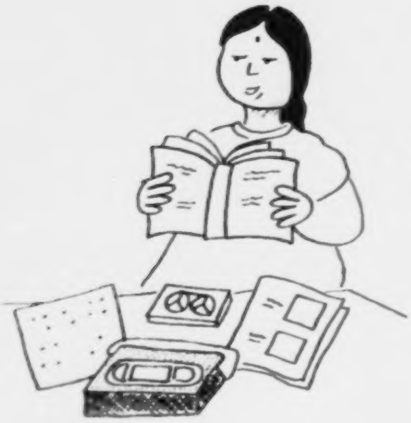
About this chapter



Deciding to go to college

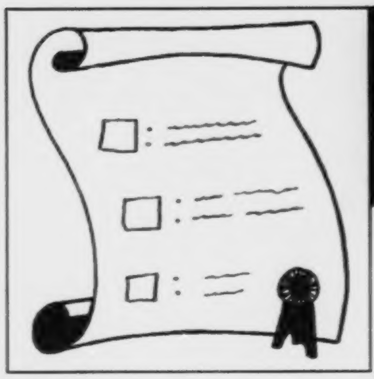
The right to have clear information that we can understand

"The information needs to be easy to understand - it is too complicated."



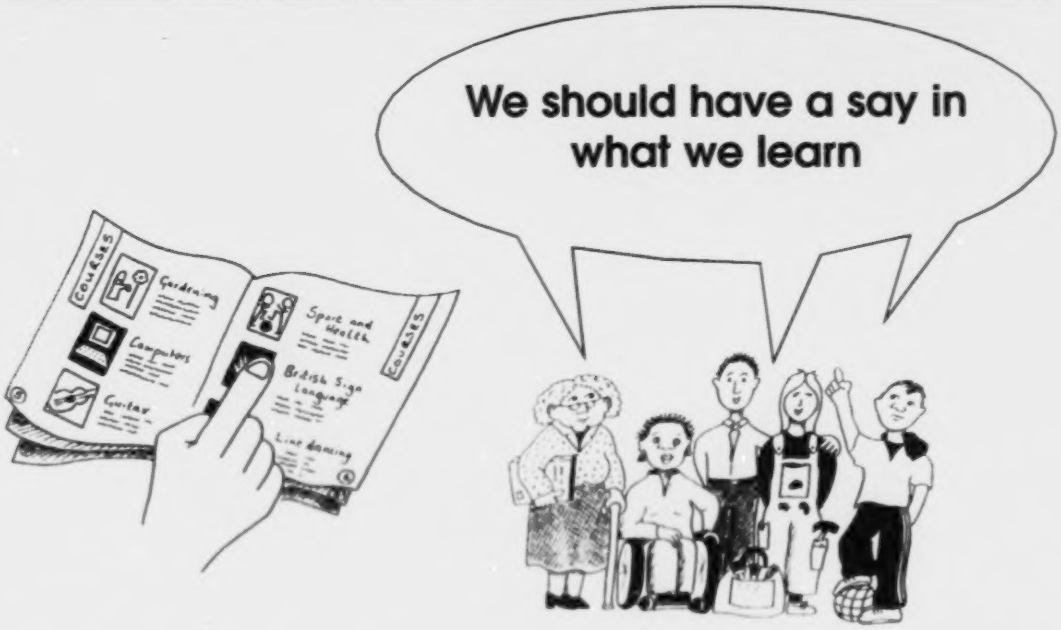
- A lot of people with learning difficulties find information that is written down is hard to understand.

- There are lots of different ways that information can be made clear and easy to understand such as using pictures or symbols or putting information on tape for people who have poor eyesight or who are blind.



Charter Point

The right to choose to go to classes


We should have a say in what we learn
Courses
Gardening
Computers
Guitar
Sport and Health
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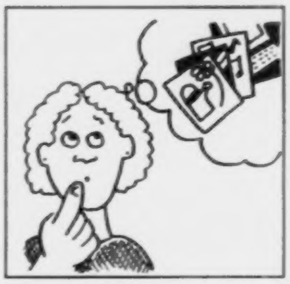
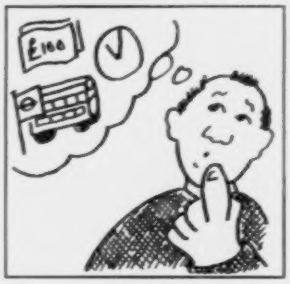
Line dancing
Courses





It is important for all people to have a say about what they want to do in their lives. It is a big decision to go to college. Everybody needs time to think about it.

How do people know if learning is right for them? What do people need to know to help them decide to go to college?

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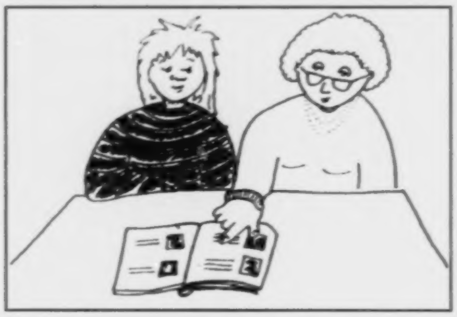
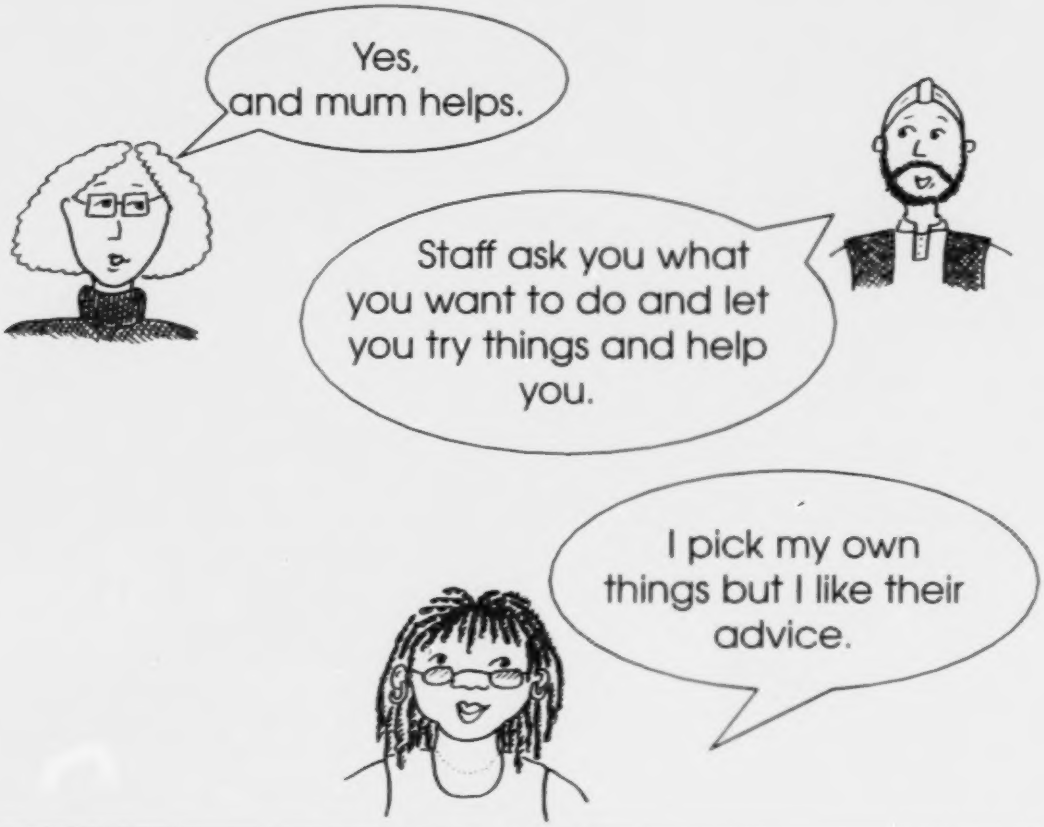
Making your own choice

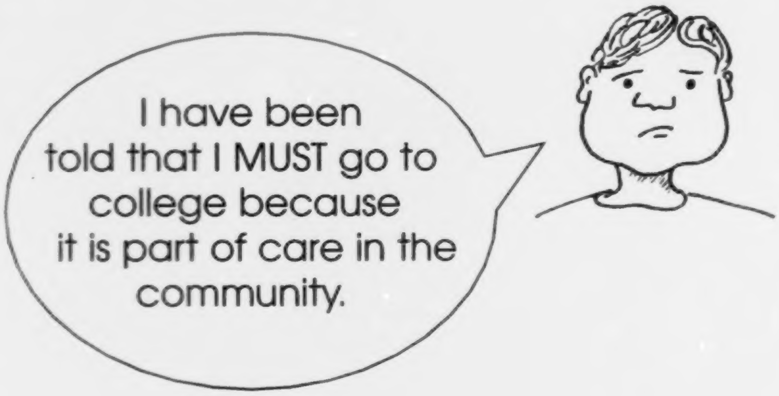
People have very different experiences when it comes to deciding to go to college to do a course.

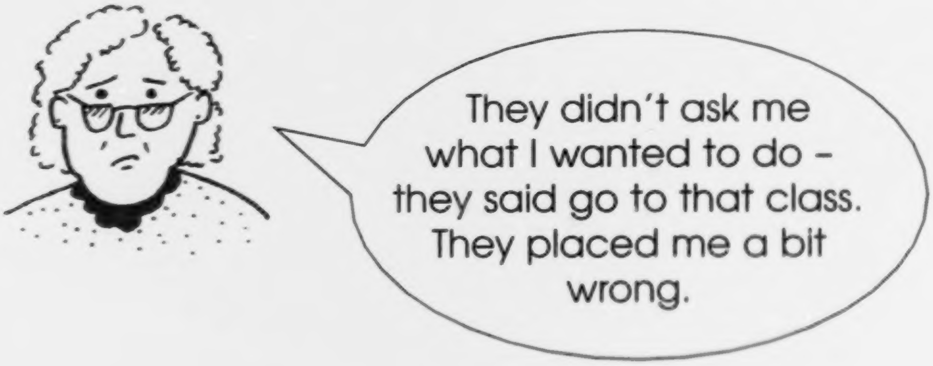


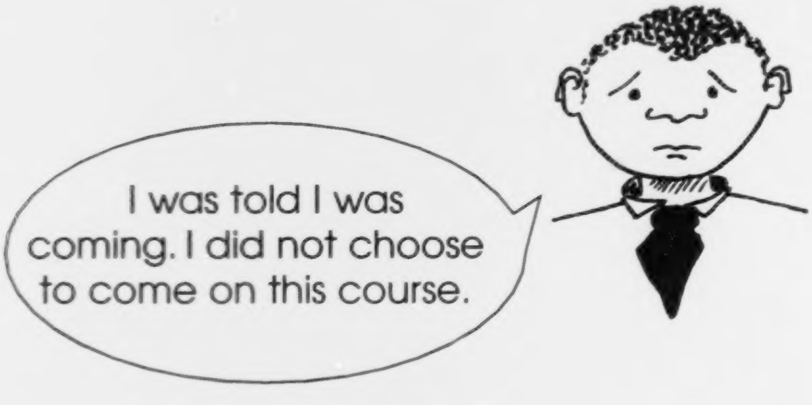
Some have help from their parents, support workers and tutors at college when they are choosing courses.


Yes, and mum helps.
Staff ask you what you want to do and let you try things and help you.
I pick my own things but I like their advice.

Others feel that it wasn't them who chose their course or to go to college.

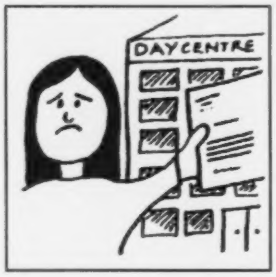

I have been told that I MUST go to college because it is part of care in the community.


They didn't ask me what I wanted to do - they said go to that class. They placed me a bit wrong.


I was told I was coming. I did not choose to come on this course.

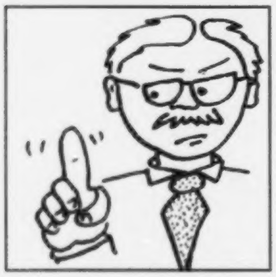
Student comments

There are some things that make it difficult to choose a course and other things that help.

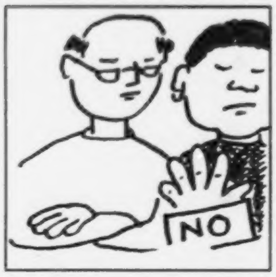


Things that make it difficult

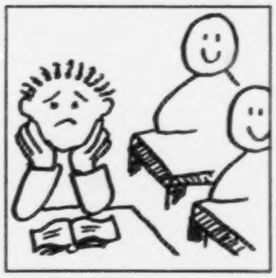
"My day centre chooses college courses for me but I would like to choose for myself."



"You can be threatened that if you don't do a course, you will lose a day centre place."

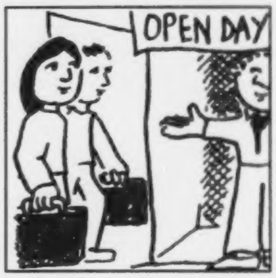


"We would like to choose more but our parents won't let us."



"You can be shoved on to a course that you don't like and it's hard to get out of."

Things that help



"Open day where people can come with their support workers or parents. They can meet staff and be shown around the building."

"Taster courses – you can try it for at least two weeks. If you like it you can stay."

"College staff come into the day centre and talk to people about college and the courses they can choose from."

"It is easier when someone goes through it with you."

"Staff sometimes do home visits."

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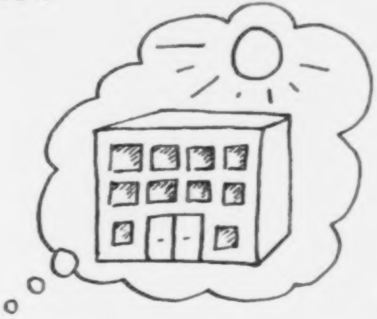
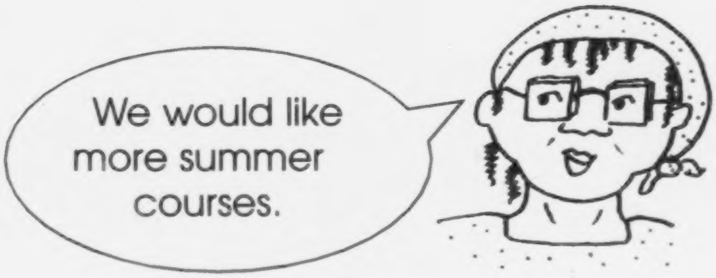
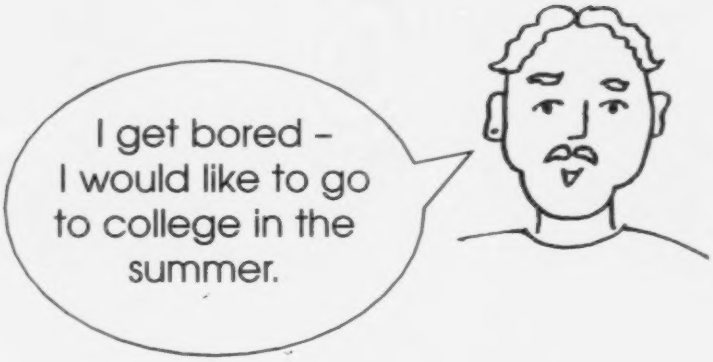
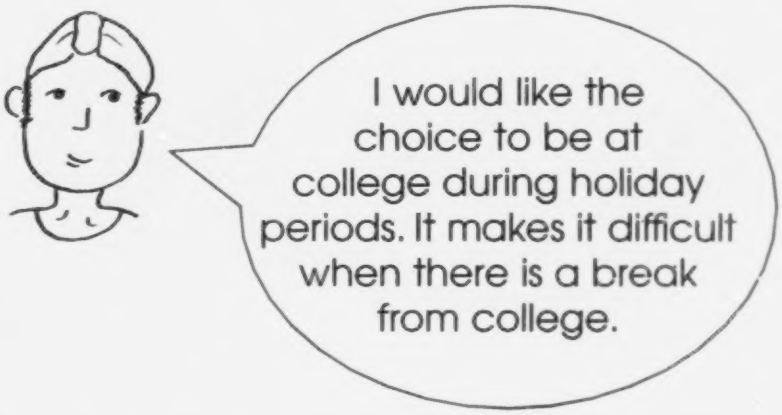
There were a lot of people who said that they would like to come to classes during the summer.




We would like more summer courses.


I get bored - I would like to go to college in the summer.


I would like the choice to be at college during holiday periods. It makes it difficult when there is a break from college.

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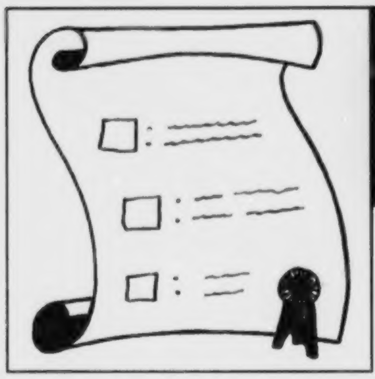
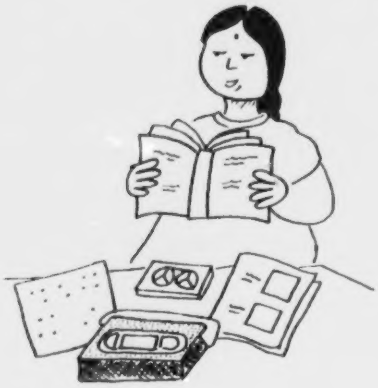
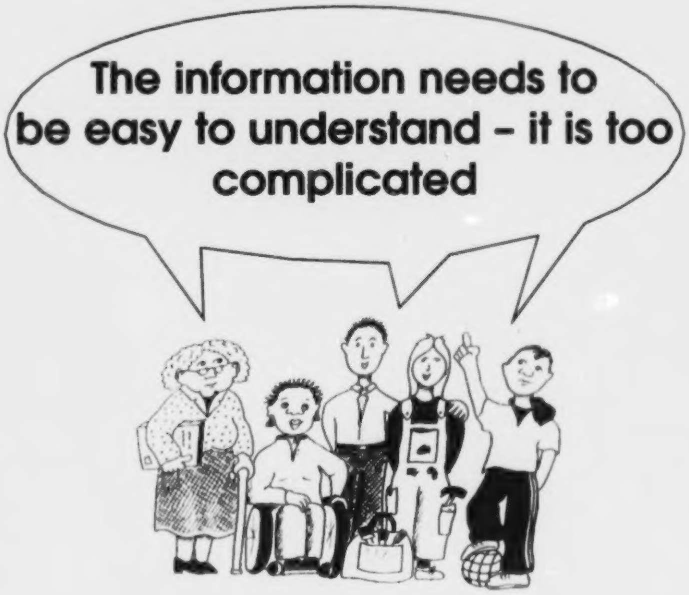


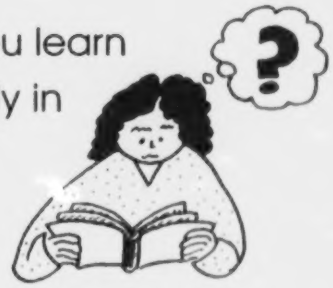
Charter Point

To have clear information that we can understand

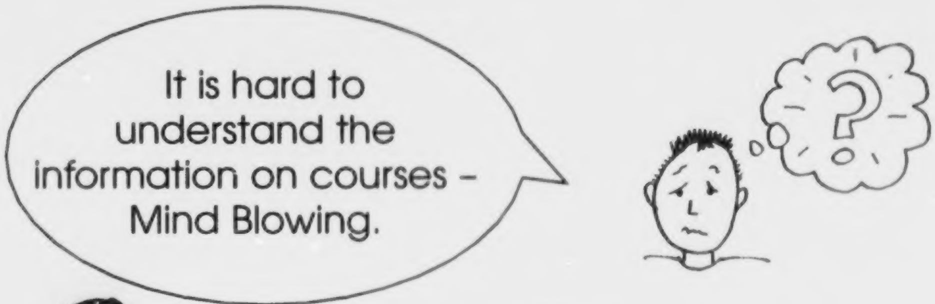


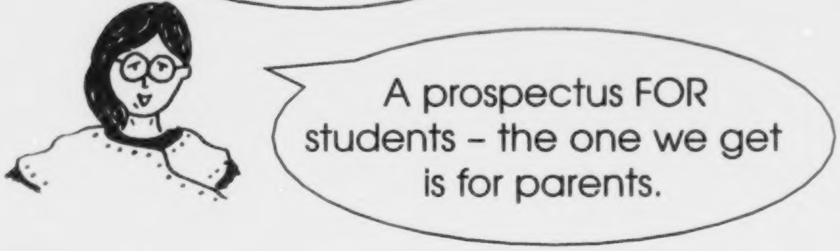

The information needs to be easy to understand – it is too complicated

Information

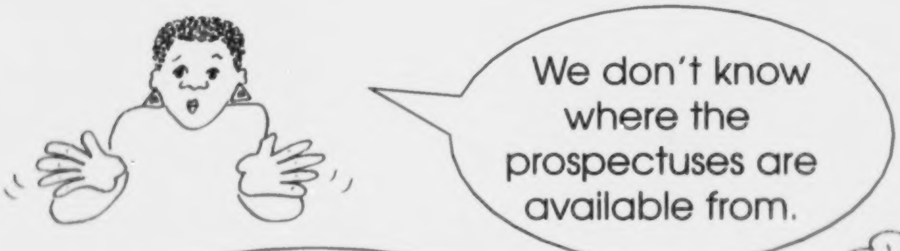


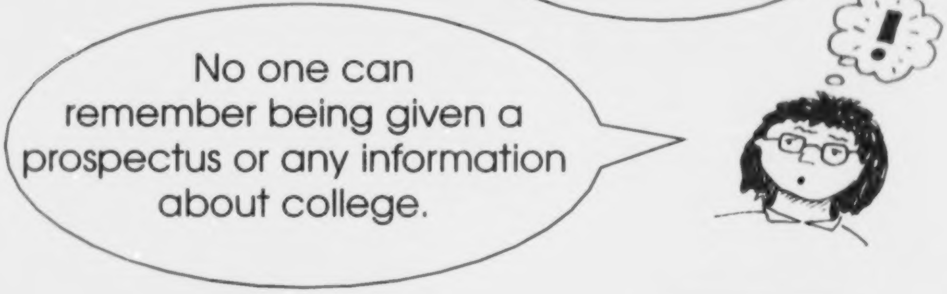
Information about the place where you learn and the courses that run there is usually in a booklet called a prospectus. A prospectus often has a lot of writing and some pictures or photos in it. This is very useful for people who can read. A lot of people with learning difficulties said that a prospectus which has to be read is not very helpful to them.

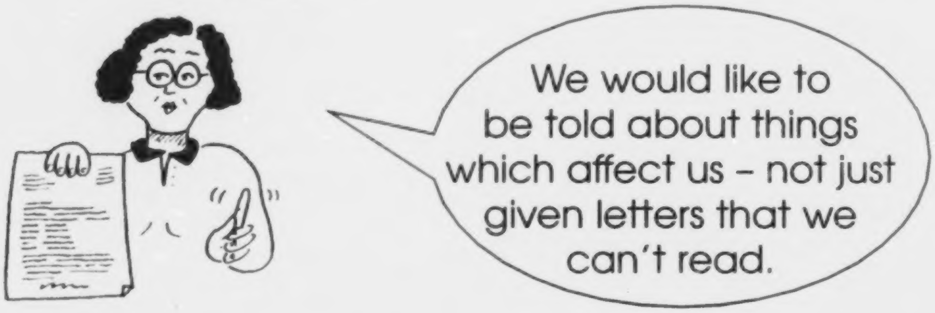

It is hard to understand the information on courses - Mind Blowing.
?


A prospectus FOR students - the one we get is for parents.

Some students said that they had not seen any information or found it difficult to get information about courses.


We don't know where the prospectuses are available from.

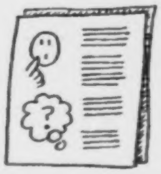

No one can remember being given a prospectus or any information about college.
!


We would like to be told about things which affect us - not just given letters that we can't read.

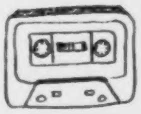
Student comments

Information should be:

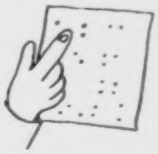
☑ "clear and put in a way we can understand, have symbols and pictures."



☑ "on tape"



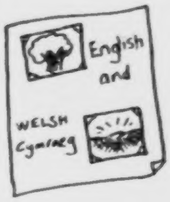
☑ "in Braille"



☑ "in large print, big and easy to read"

Big and easy to read

☑ "with colour photos, with English in the front and Welsh in the back"


English and
WELSH Cymraeg

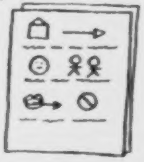
☑ "a video to let us know about courses"

☑ "on local radio"

☑ "at a one-stop information point so you don't have to go to different places to see different people"

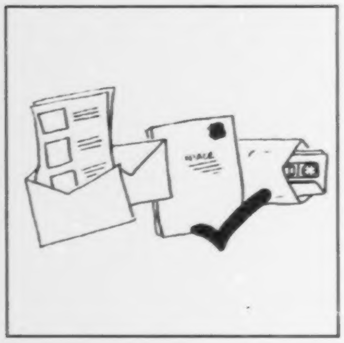
Information

☑ "in Makaton symbols"



Charter ideas in action

Clear and easy to understand information



Some of the students who sent in their ideas for the **Charter for Learning** used symbols, pictures, big print and photographs to make the information clear and easy to understand. Others sent in videos or tapes.

Entry Level

Students and staff at **Northampton College** have produced a prospectus with photographs and symbols.

Students on the Towards Independence Course at **Lowestoft College** designed and wrote a student handbook. It uses clear and easy to understand words and pictures.

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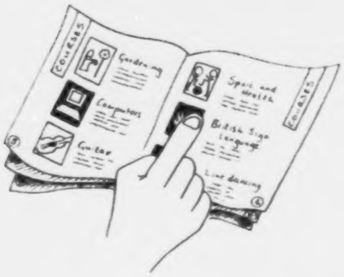
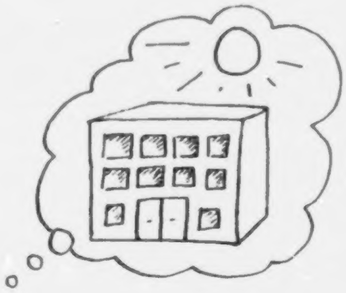
Questions to think about

Staff


Courses
Gardening
Computers
Guitar
Sport and Health
British Sign Language
Line dancing
Courses

How much control do students have over the decision to come to college?

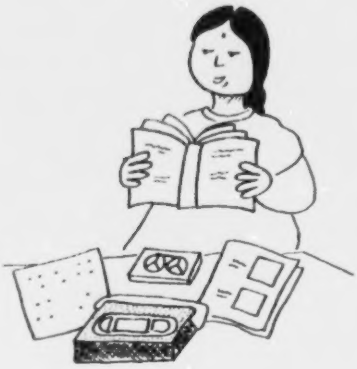
What help and advice is available to students when they are choosing courses and do they find this useful?



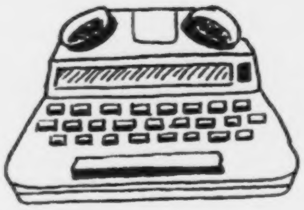
Have summer courses for students with learning difficulties been considered?

What form is the prospectus presented in and is it accessible to students with learning difficulties who:

- don't read?
- have poor eye sight or are blind?
- do not speak English as their first language.



Is there a minicom for deaf students?



Students

How could the information you get about the courses be clearer and easier to understand?

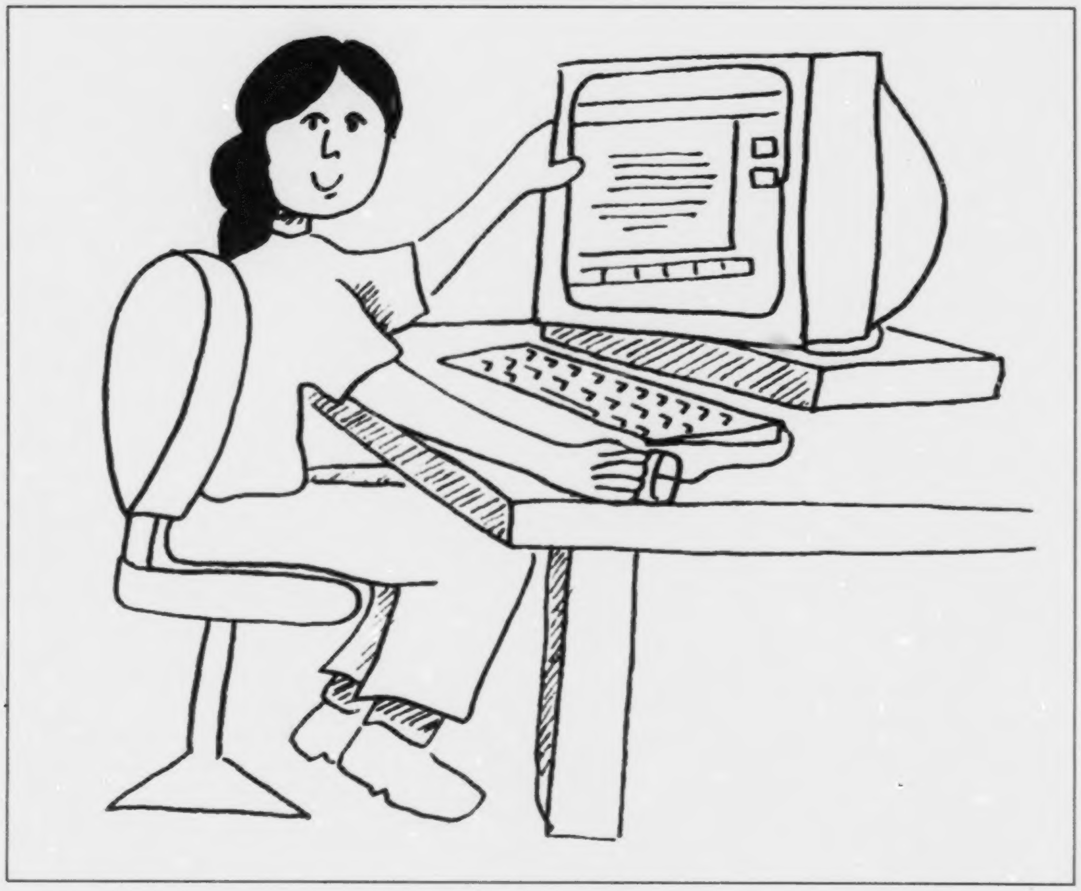
Big and easy to read

Do you get the help you need so you can choose:

- if you want to go to college?
- which course you want to do?

Chapter 3

Why we want to learn



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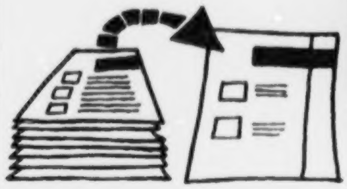

About this chapter

Why we want to learn

In this chapter students with learning difficulties talk about what is important about learning.

Learning is important because it can help you feel more confident, be more independent and learn new skills.

A choice of courses

- People with learning difficulties want a choice of lots of different things to learn.
- Some people want more choice about where they go to college and what they learn on their courses.
- Some people want to do courses that are for students with learning difficulties only, others want to be able to learn with students on mainstream courses. Some people want to be able to choose to do both kinds of courses.

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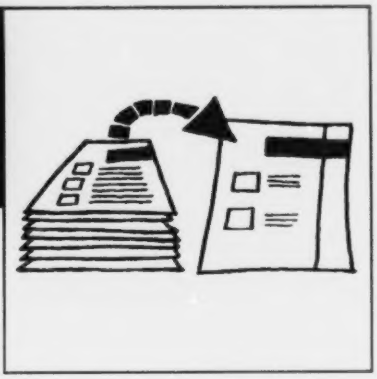
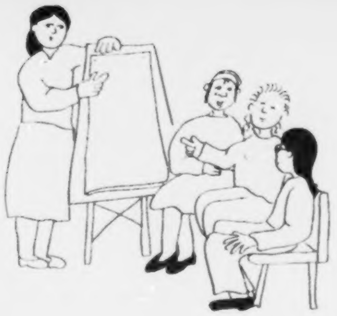
About this chapter





The right to be able to do a course to get a job

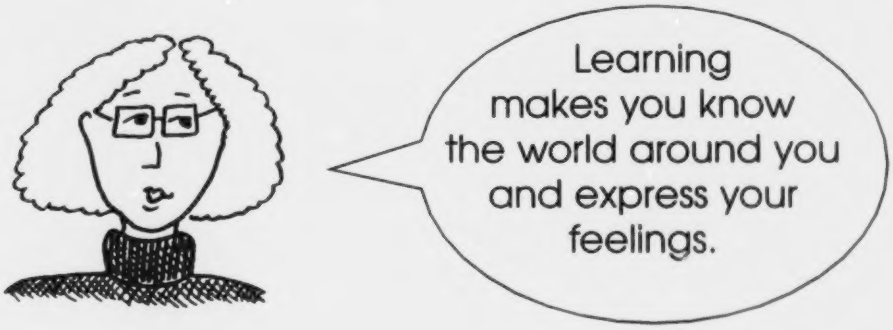
"To give us the skills to maybe get a job"

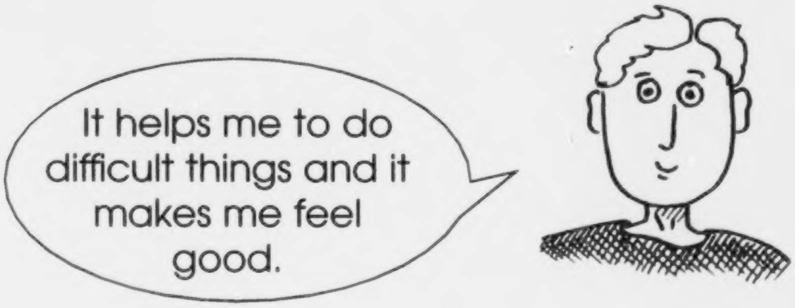
- A lot of people with learning difficulties think that it is important to be able to do courses that can help get you work.

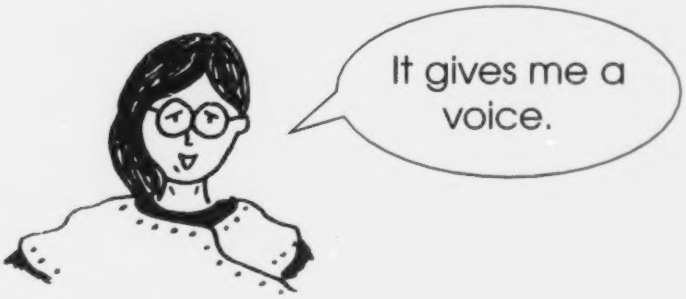
- Most people want to get a job and do some work but some don't think they will be able to find a job.

What is important about learning?

Why do people want to go classes? What do people think is important about being a student and learning?


Learning makes you know the world around you and express your feelings.


It helps me to do difficult things and it makes me feel good.


It gives me a voice.

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Student comments

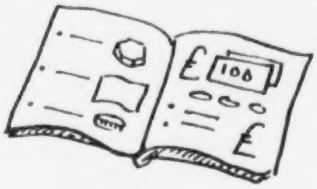
Learning is important because:

- "It helps you in the community "

- "It makes you feel like adults."
- "It gives me something to do, stops me being bored."

- "Learning might help you get a job, become more independent, be a more interesting person, be more experienced."
- "It helps you mix with other people."

- "It shows what we can do and not what we cannot do."



- "It makes it easier to do shopping, as we learn about money."

- "College makes you feel more confident and makes you smile."

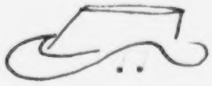
- "I would sleep a lot if I ended my college course."

- "It helps me talk to different people about more things and tell my sisters what I have done."

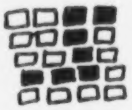
A choice of courses

The students who sent in their ideas for the charter were learning lots of different things such as:

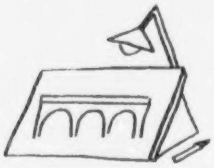
Computers and using the Internet



Line Dancing



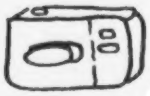
Mosaics



Engineering

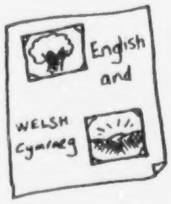
Shakespeare

Sign Language

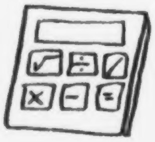


Photography

Work Preparation

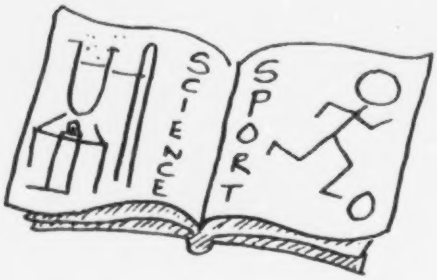


Welsh



Maths

Some people felt that they had a good choice from lots of courses. Others wanted more choice.



"More choices about courses."
"More science."
"More sport."
"More courses that are just about learning things like history."
"More basic courses."
"More practical courses."

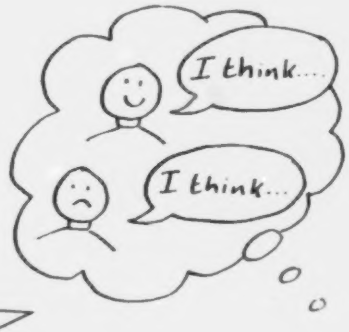
We have a good choice of classes to choose from.

People wanted more choice about where they went to college and more say about what they learn on their courses.

It would be good to look around other colleges and see what they do.

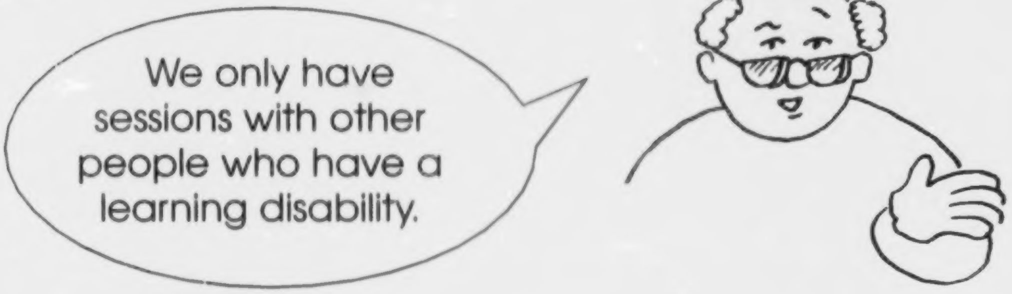
We can choose what we would like to learn about but we don't have a say in what each lesson is about.

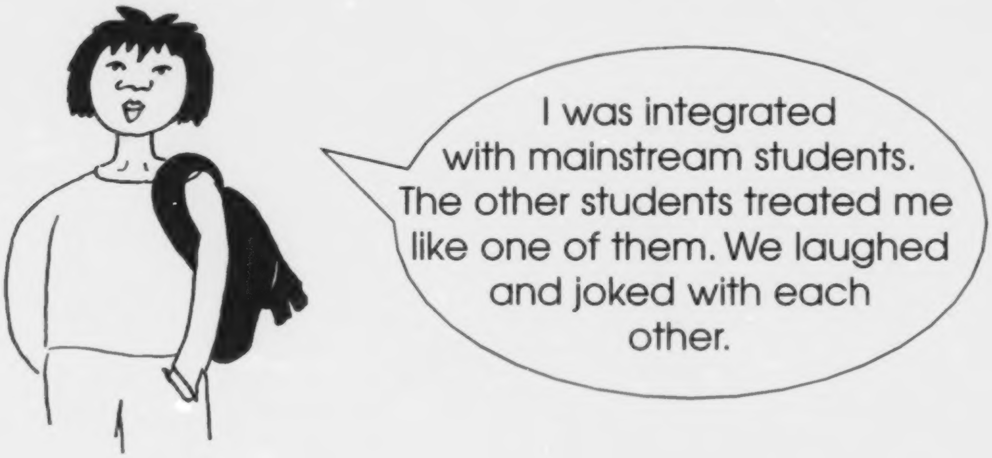
We want the right to have our own opinions and say about what is taught in college.

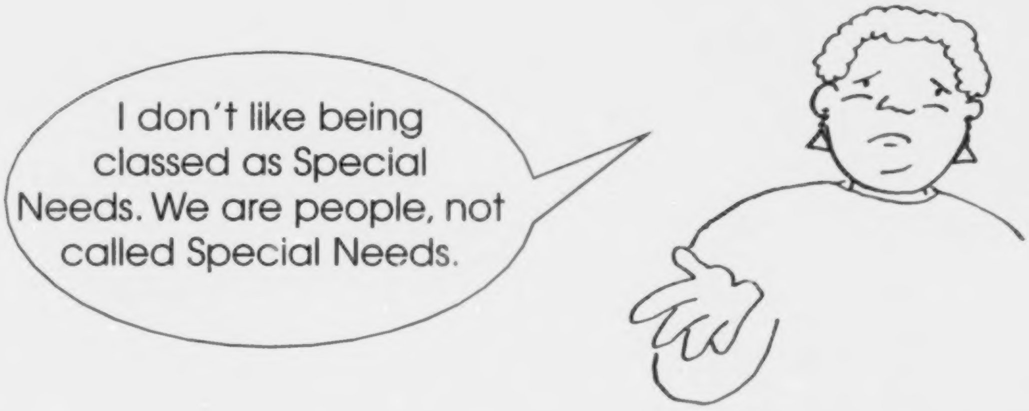

I think....
I think...

Students should be allowed to comment on courses.

Some people were studying on discrete courses, courses that are for students with learning difficulties only. Other people were on mainstream courses learning with other students. There were also people studying on both kinds of courses for different subjects.


We only have sessions with other people who have a learning disability.


I was integrated with mainstream students. The other students treated me like one of them. We laughed and joked with each other.


I don't like being classed as Special Needs. We are people, not called Special Needs.

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Student comments

In some places people with learning difficulties are not given the opportunity to choose to do mainstream courses with other students.

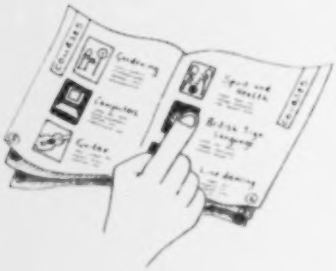
Choosing the same courses as other students:

- "People should have the chance to do the same courses as others."

- "The right to choose what courses we want to do without the hassle of 'are they going to be too hard?'"

- "Why is there separation between people? It should be inclusive education."

- "A lot of the time, people don't give people with disabilities a go."


Courses
Gardening
Computers
Guitar
Sport and Health
British Sign Language
Line dancing
Courses

- "Give access to as many courses as possible."

- "We would like the chance to try something that goes on in other parts of the college."

- "More opportunities to join mainstream classes."

Student comments

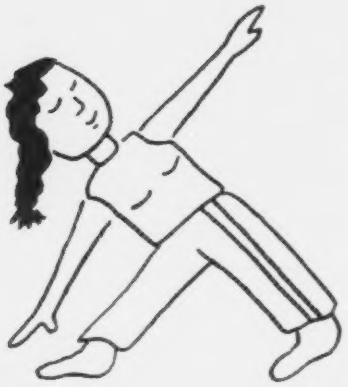
Not everyone wanted to learn in mainstream courses with other students but some people enjoyed learning this way.

Learning Together:

Equal Respect?

- "Some of us feel uneasy about being integrated into mainstream classes. We want to be integrated in a programme of learning which is accorded equal respect with other programmes."

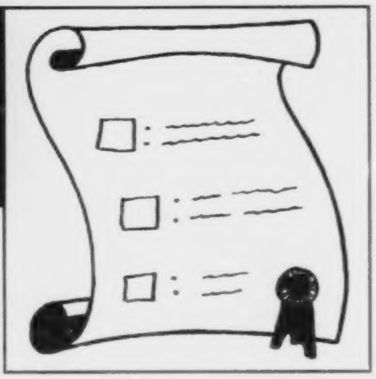
- "We do enjoy our discrete groups. We like learning with our friends who have the same interests as ourselves. We need a choice of both discrete and mainstream courses."

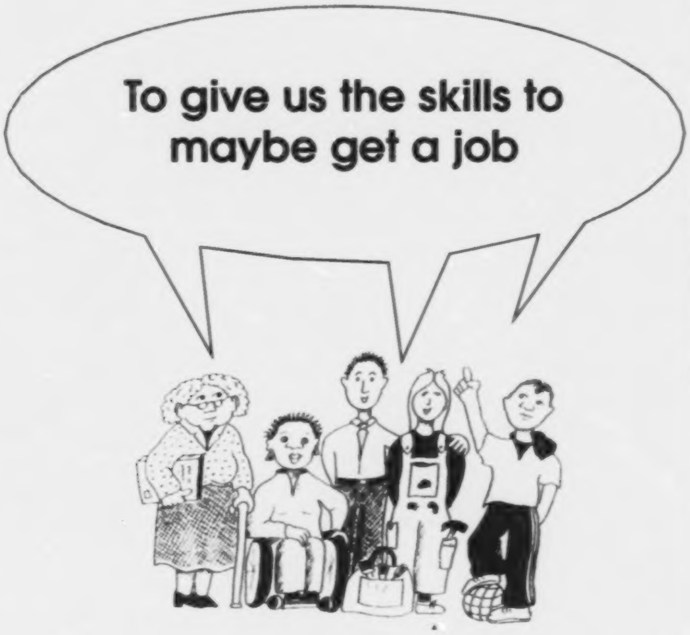


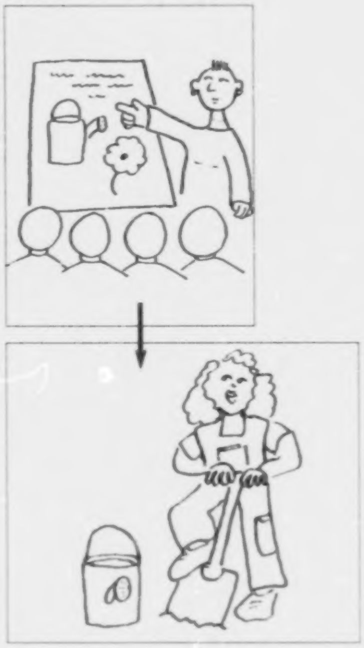
- "About one year ago I decided I would like to branch out and see what else they do in the other parts of the college. I have been doing Yoga and French for quite some time now. Having taken that step into mainstream I feel very at home in finding out how other classes work."

Charter Point

The right to be able to do a course to get a job




To give us the skills to maybe get a job



One important thing about being a student is being able to do a course where you can learn skills to help you get a job. People who wrote in with their ideas for the Charter for Learning think that courses that can help you get work are very important.

Learning might help you get a job.

There should be a chance of work or money at the end of the course.

Helps you try for a better job. Helps you plan for the future.

Two groups of students at **Yale College** talked about what they wanted to do after they left college. Students in both of the groups said they wanted to find jobs. The jobs they were interested in were:

An office job

Caring for children

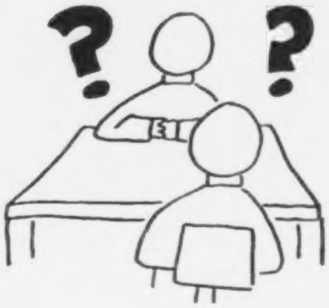
Catering

Working in a hospital

Student comments

The students at **Yale College** talked about things they could do at college that may help get a job.

Learning for work, things that help:



- "Interview practice."
- "Safety in catering, the temperature you need for washing up."

- "You're going to use Maths and English if you get an office job."

- "Work experience – to try different things to see what I like when I leave."
- "Get qualifications."

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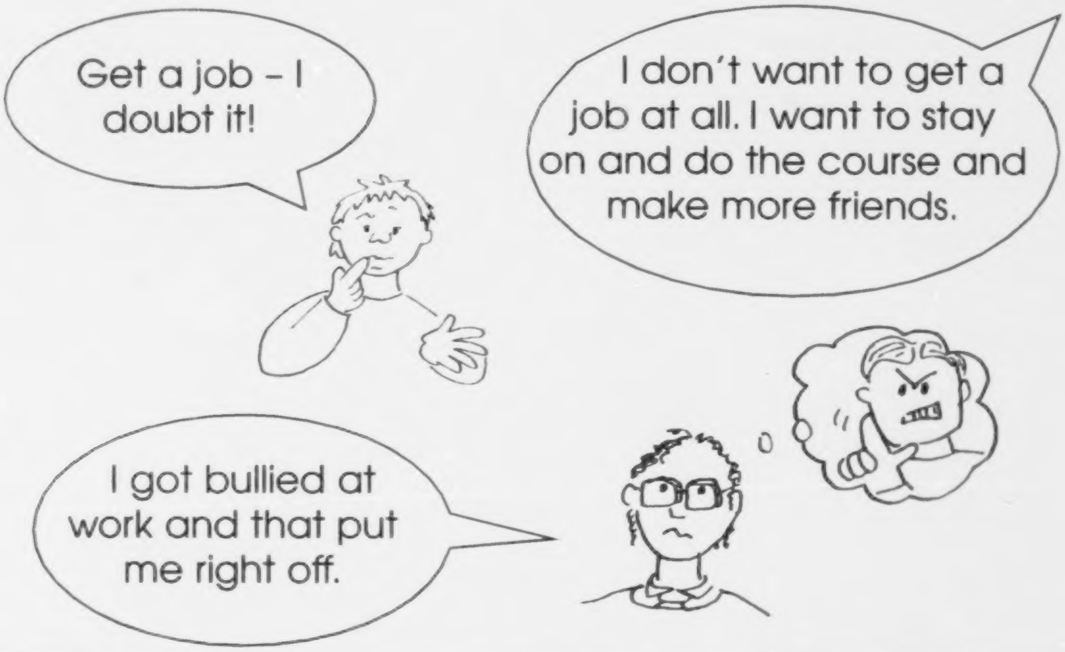
Comments from other students

- "Coming to classes – motivates us to get up each morning and get used to a daily routine which will be useful if we have to go to work."
- "It may lead to employment. We can develop our skills and learn to be more independent. It gives you a future."
- "Get as much experience as you can before you go to work."

Not all people want to get a job or think that they will get work.


Get a job – I doubt it!
I don't want to get a job at all. I want to stay on and do the course and make more friends.
I got bullied at work and that put me right off.

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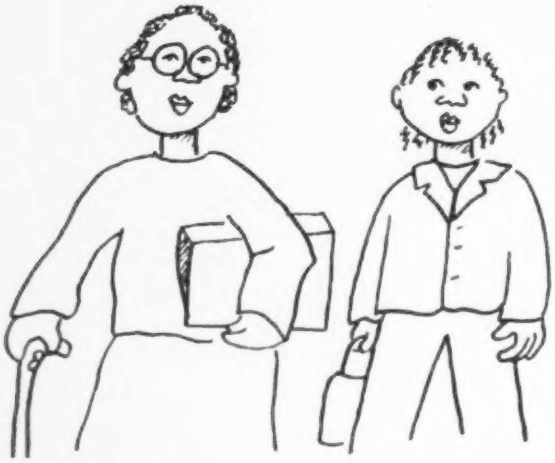
Charter ideas in action

Supporting students in mainstream classes

West Sussex Learning Links

West Sussex Learning Links supports people with learning difficulties to attend mainstream classes. A person with a learning difficulty can go to classes together with a volunteer or "Buddy". Volunteers have training about their role. The training includes meeting with people with learning difficulties who are already going to mainstream classes with volunteers.



Questions to think about

PLAN
Have a Say!

Students and staff

Do students with learning difficulties have the chance to:

- ☑ Develop independence at different levels?
- ☑ Increase their self-esteem?
- ☑ Learn as part of a plan for the future?
- ☑ Develop skills for work and living?
- ☑ Build on what they can do rather than what they cannot do?
- ☑ Have a say in their learning?
- ☑ Look at more than one college?
- ☑ Choose the college that is best for them?

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Questions to think about

How broad is the curriculum (learning choice) on offer for students with learning difficulties?

Are there ways students can be supported into mainstream classes by:

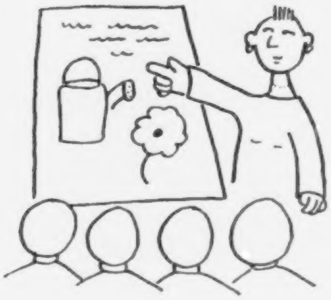
- Offering individual support if needed?
- Adapting the course to accommodate the strengths of all students?

Do staff and students with learning difficulties discuss courses that run as well as possible courses the students would like to do?

How can students and tutors decide together what they will be learning in a session or on course?

Courses
Cooking
Computers
Guitar
Sport and Health
British Sign Language
Line dancing

Can students with learning difficulties choose from the mainstream courses if they want to?

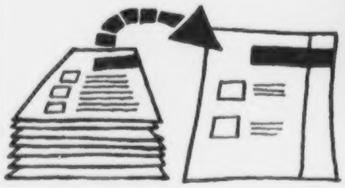


Are there courses which train students with learning difficulties for work?

Are there good links with supported work schemes and local employers to help students move on to work when they finish their courses?

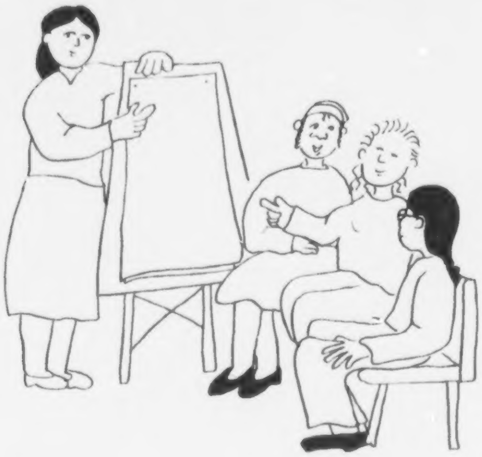
Chapter 4

Learning



About this chapter

Learning



In this chapter people with learning difficulties talk about learning.

The right to have fun learning

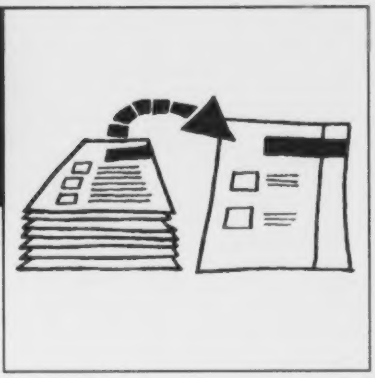
"The more you enjoy it, the more you learn"

- Each person has their own favourite ways of learning.

- When we enjoy learning and learning is fun, it helps us learn.

- Learning can be difficult when things are hard to understand or they are difficult to do.

About this chapter

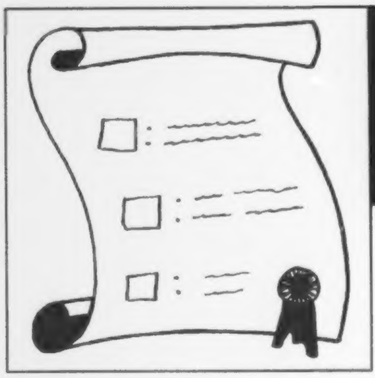


Getting certificates - accreditation

- A lot of people like to get a certificate at the end of their course.

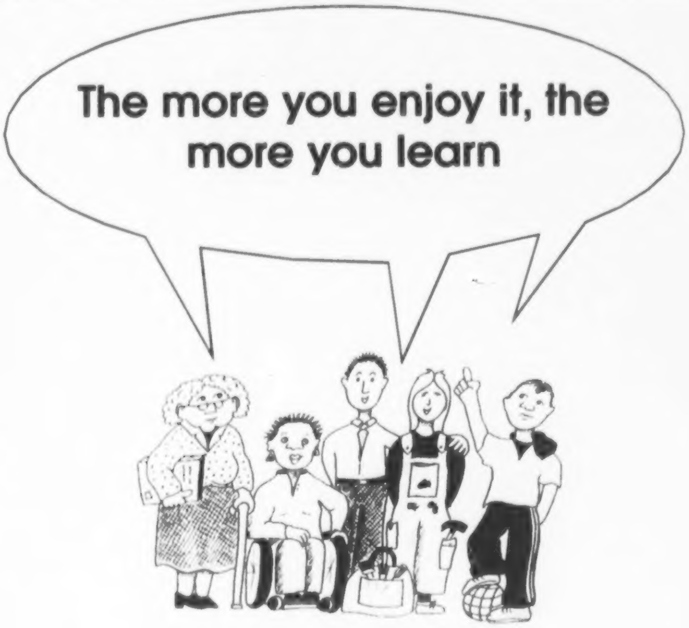
- Some certificates can help you get a job, they can also show friends and family what you have achieved and they can help you feel more confident.

- Some people have had problems with their benefits when they have done courses that are for qualifications for jobs.

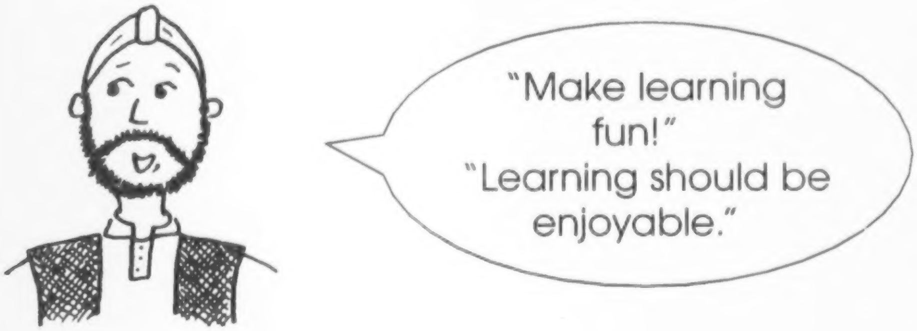


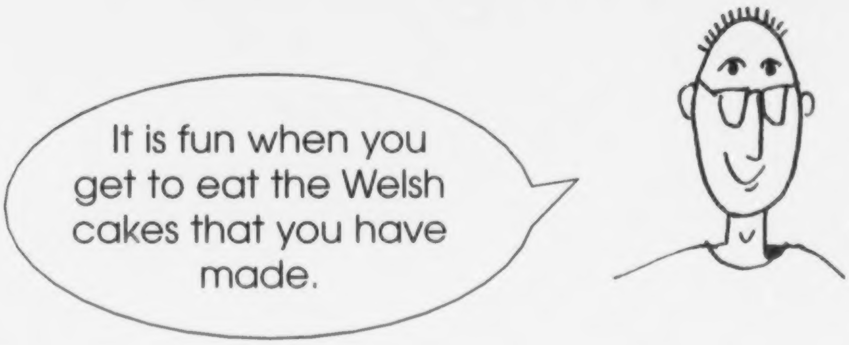
Charter Point

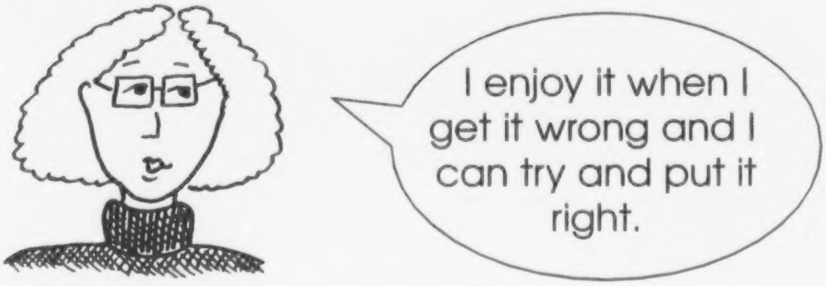
The right to have fun learning

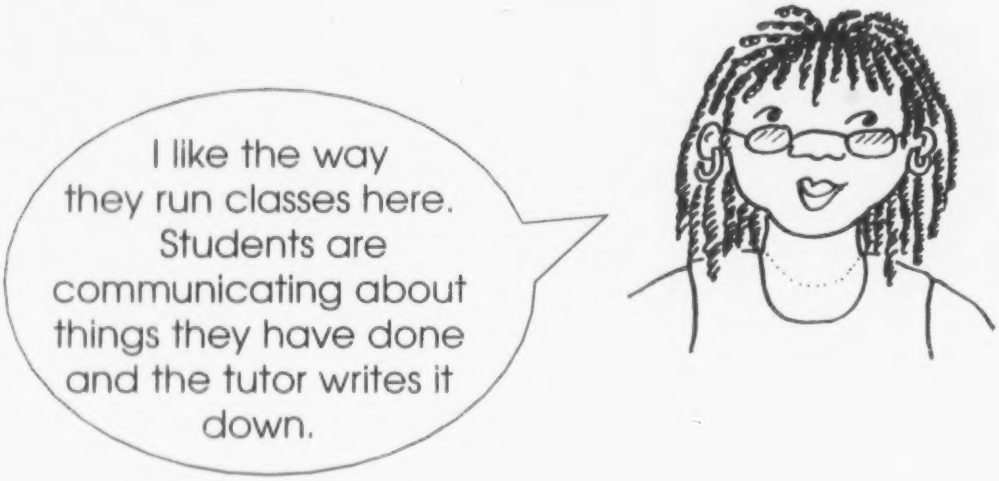

The more you enjoy it, the more you learn

Everyone has their different and favourite ways of learning. The thing that helps us all is when we enjoy learning and being a student.


"Make learning fun!"
"Learning should be enjoyable."

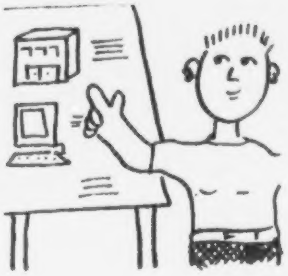

It is fun when you get to eat the Welsh cakes that you have made.


I enjoy it when I get it wrong and I can try and put it right.

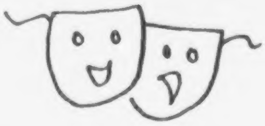

I like the way they run classes here. Students are communicating about things they have done and the tutor writes it down.

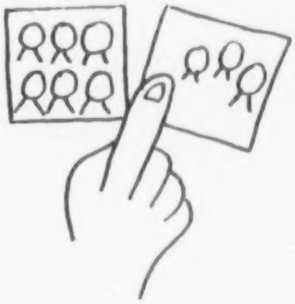
Student comments

Ways of learning we enjoy

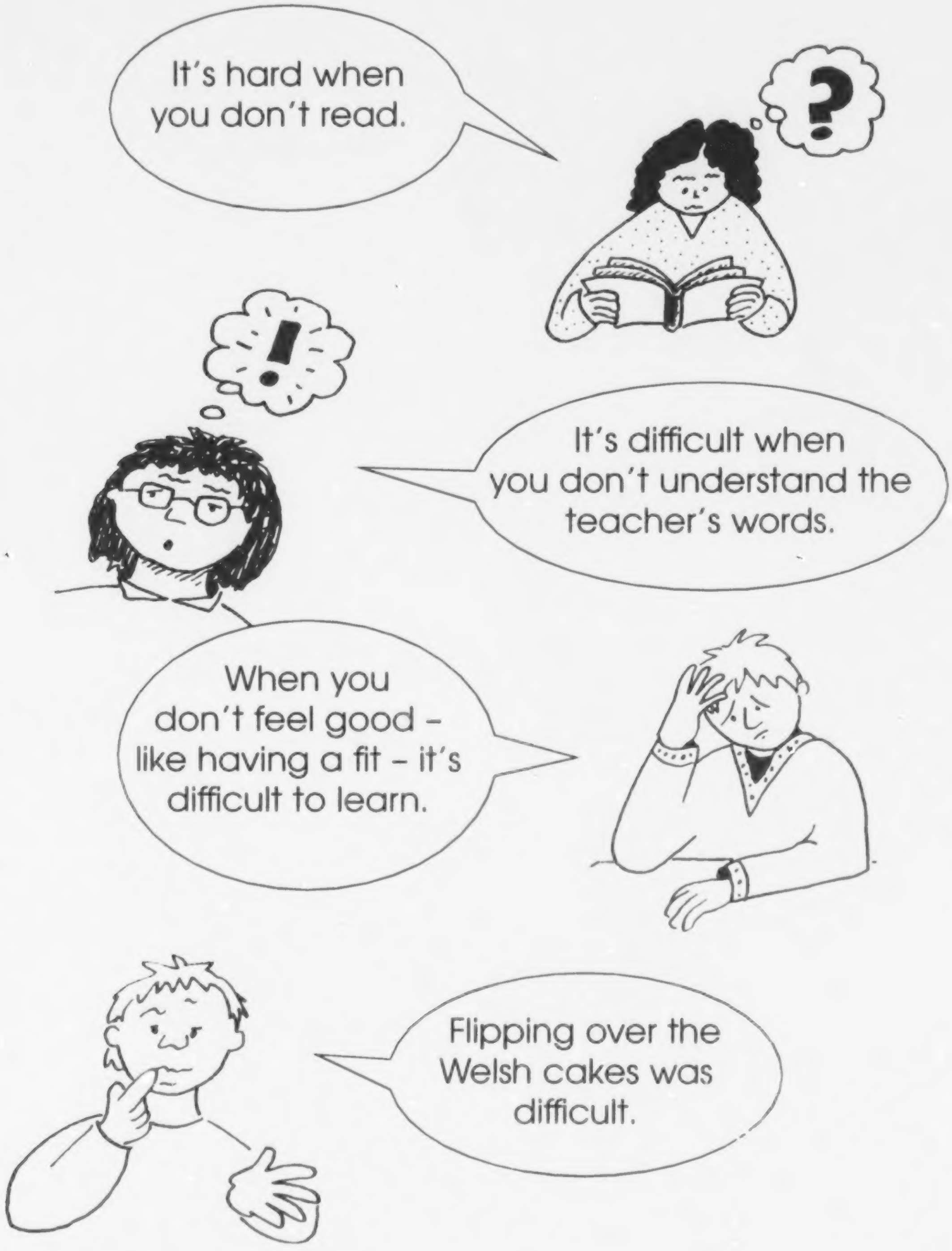


- ☑ "The teacher makes simple points so you can understand."
- ☑ "When we learn by doing."
- ☑ "It's great when we do a performance."
- ☑ "We go out on visits."
- ☑ "Doing work placements."
- ☑ "Working with others."
- ☑ "Using practical skills."
- ☑ "When the tutor shows you how it should and shouldn't be done."
- ☑ "When you can join in."
- ☑ "Being able to try."
- ☑ "When we are in small groups – lots of attention."





Learning can be difficult when something is hard to do, when things are difficult to understand or when you don't feel good.


It's hard when you don't read.
?
!
It's difficult when you don't understand the teacher's words.
When you don't feel good - like having a fit - it's difficult to learn.
Flipping over the Welsh cakes was difficult.

Student comments

Learning is fun when:

- "It is challenging and thought provoking."
- "You don't realise that you have learnt it."

- "You use what you have learnt outside the classroom."

- "You know you can do it!"
- "You can have a laugh."
- "We get certificates."

- "We are with our friends, talking over issues."

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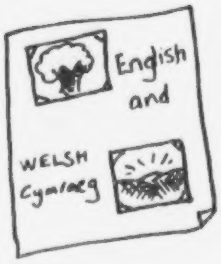
Learning is fun when

- "The atmosphere is relaxed and you have nice tutors."
- "You are learning words off by heart in Welsh."



- "You don't have to read."

- "You're not being bullied."
- "You want to do it."

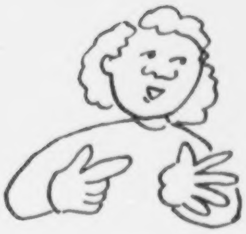
- "You feel valued."
- "You don't want to stop."

- "You do role play."
- "There are no interruptions."

- "You do reading and writing so you are more important."

Learning is difficult when:

- "If you are deaf and the tutor doesn't use sign language."



- "The class is too noisy."
- "You have problems on your mind and you can't concentrate."

- "I cannot see or hear well."

- "You are on the wrong course."
- "People call you names like handicapped."

- "The tutor doesn't understand about learning difficulties."
- "You have to read."

Learning is difficult when

- "You're a bit nervous."
- "You don't know about the course in advance."

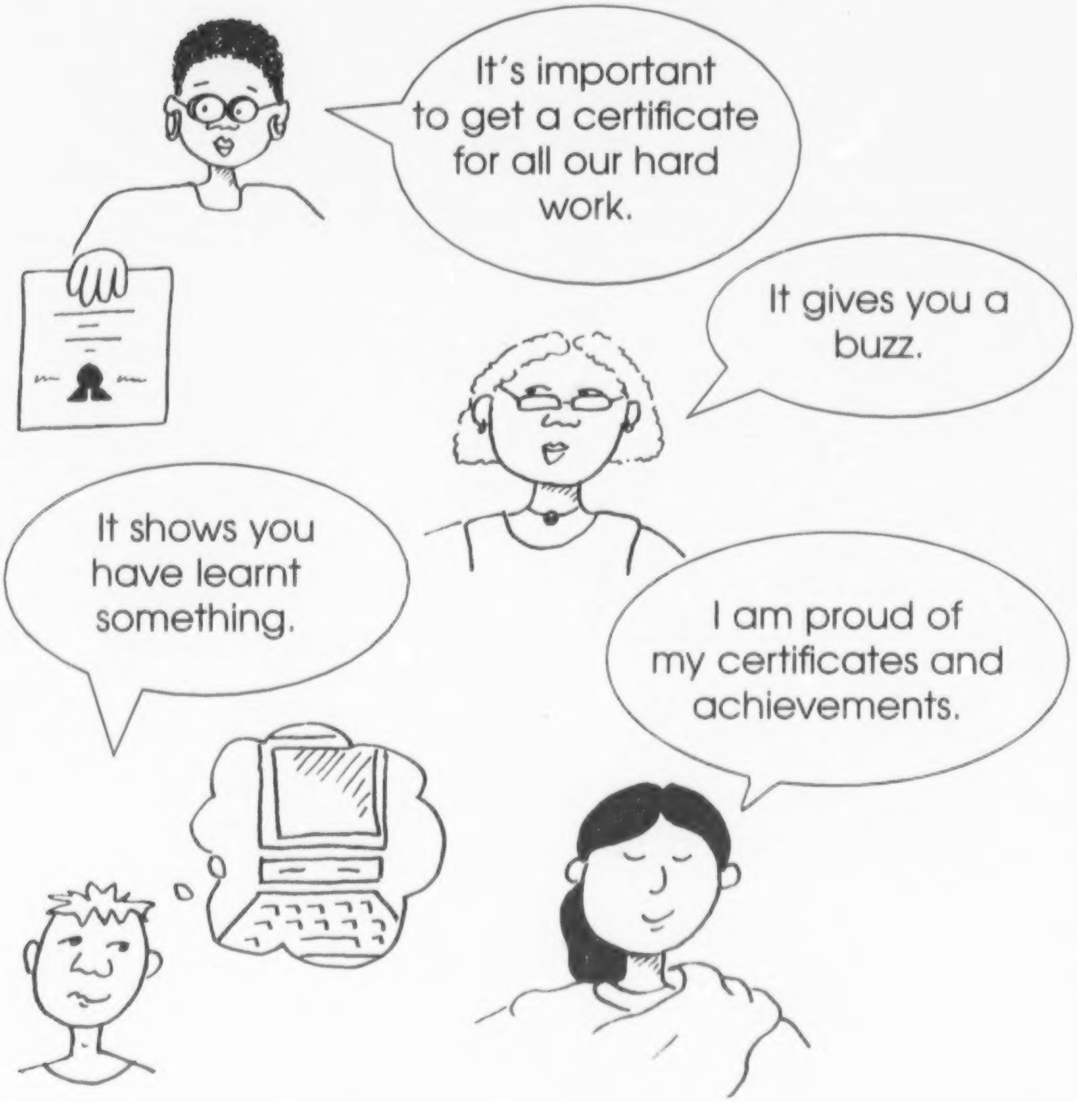
- "You get a teacher who doesn't want to know, then you haven't got a chance."
- "You get new teachers."
- "There is not enough support."

- "You can't see any point to it."
- "You are too embarrassed to ask a question."

- "When you need staff to help you with access."

Getting certificates - accreditation

A lot of people look forward to getting a certificate at the end of a course. It is a way of showing other people what you have learnt and a way to remember all the work you have done on the course.


It's important to get a certificate for all our hard work.
It gives you a buzz.
It shows you have learnt something.
I am proud of my certificates and achievements.

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Student comments

There were lots of reasons why people wanted to have certificates.

Certificates are important because:

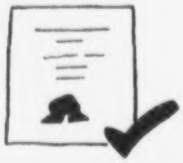
- "They show family and outsiders that people with learning difficulties can do work for this."

- "They helped me achieve a lot more, to get further education and go on to other things."

- "We like getting certificates although probably none of us will gain paid employment."

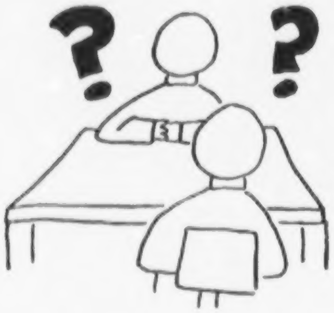
- "We want a chance to get a certificate to help get a job."

- "It's exciting going up and getting a certificate."

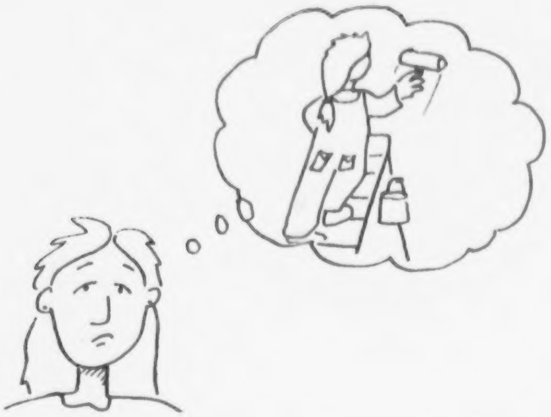


- "Getting this certificate helped me get my confidence."

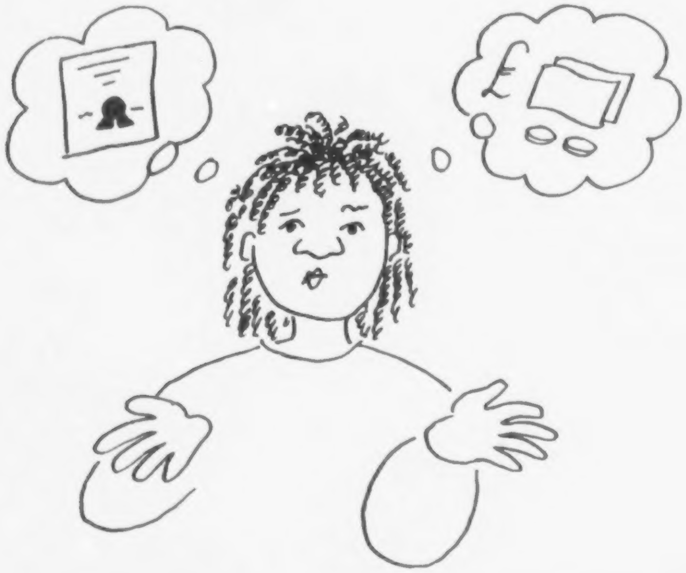
- "You can show it to employers if you're trying to get a job."



Some people with learning difficulties had had problems getting on to courses that lead to a qualification to help get a job, like painting and decorating.



In one college students were told that if they did courses to get qualifications they might lose their benefits. Some people think that this is because if a person with learning difficulties manages to get a qualification then they can't have a learning difficulty. Therefore they should not be getting benefit!



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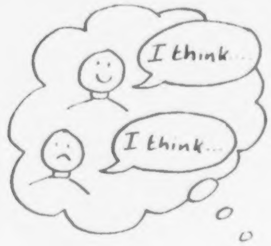
Questions to think about

Staff

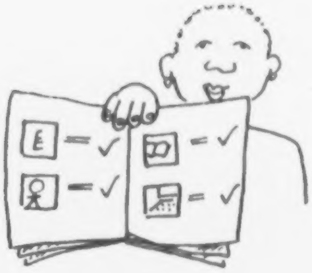

I think...
I think...

How do staff find out about the ways of learning that students enjoy and that help them learn best?

Students and staff

How do students have a say about their learning so it can change the way that tutors run courses?
How do they have a say about;

- favourite ways of learning?
- feeling comfortable when learning?
- learning support for students?
- building on skills that students have, rather than focussing on what students cannot do?



Can students obtain recognition for what they have learned, when there is no accreditation?

Information

Is there clear student information about accredited courses to explain the value of course certificates?

MY ASSESSMENT

Do students have a record of learning that could help them towards getting a certificate on a later course?

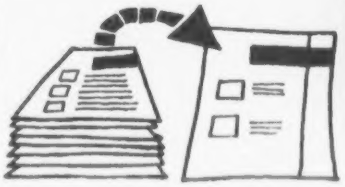
What are the reasons for choosing the kinds of accreditation you are using; does it have real currency?

Can students with learning difficulties work to gain qualifications without the risk of losing their benefits?

Do students know who to talk to about things that make learning difficult? When can students talk to staff about these things?

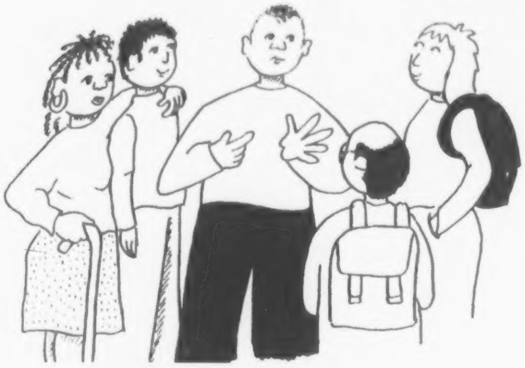
Chapter 5

Being a student



About this chapter

Being a student



In this chapter people with learning difficulties talk about meeting other students, making friends, feeling part of things and comfortable where they learn.

The right to have the chance to make friends

"To mix with the crowd a little more and make friends"

- People with learning difficulties think that making friends is an important part of being a student.
- People with learning difficulties want to feel that they are part of the place where they learn. They want to be treated as equals along with other students.
- Some students with learning difficulties feel left out and separate from other students.

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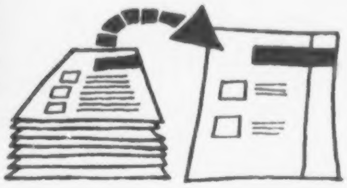
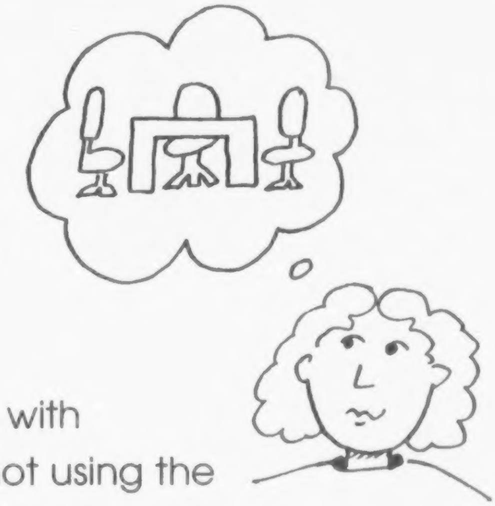
About this chapter

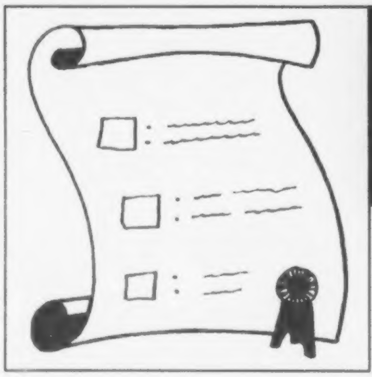


The right to learn in a nice place

"A place where you feel comfortable"

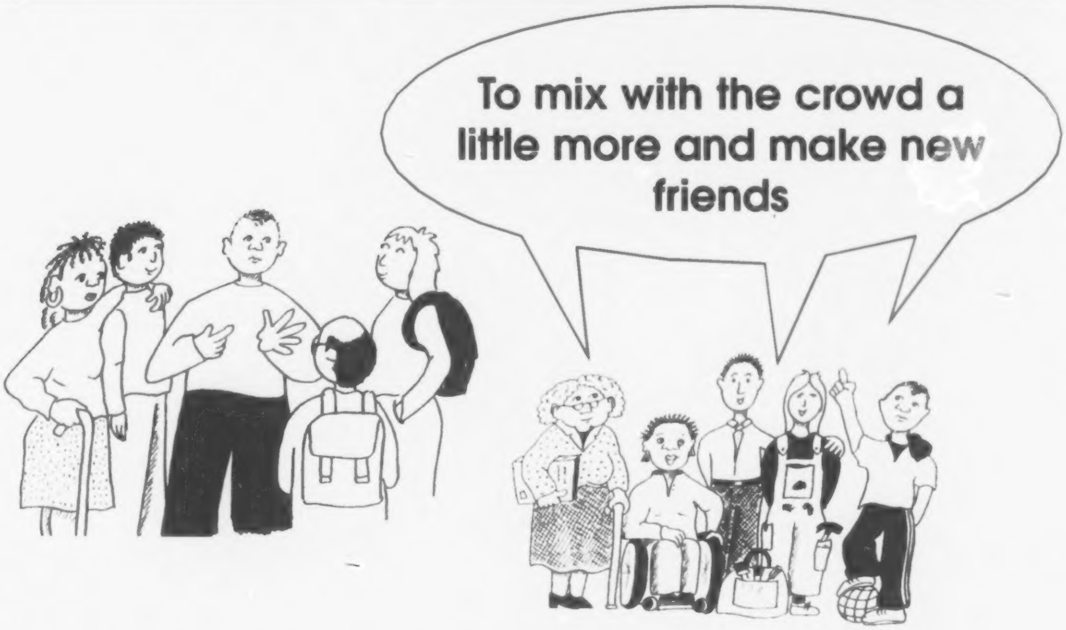


- People with learning dificulties want to feel welcome and comfortable at the place where they go to learn.
- In some places students with learning difficulties are not using the same facilities as other students, for example the gym.
- It can be difficult for students who use wheelchairs to get about college and feel comfortable.

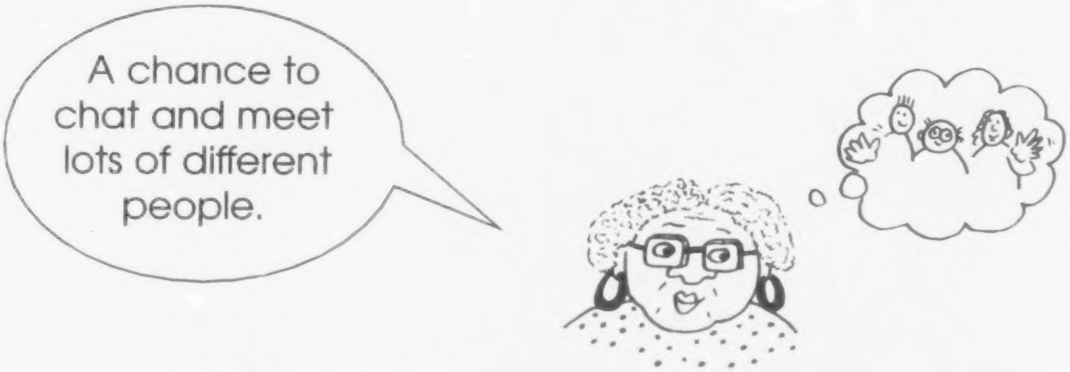


Charter Point

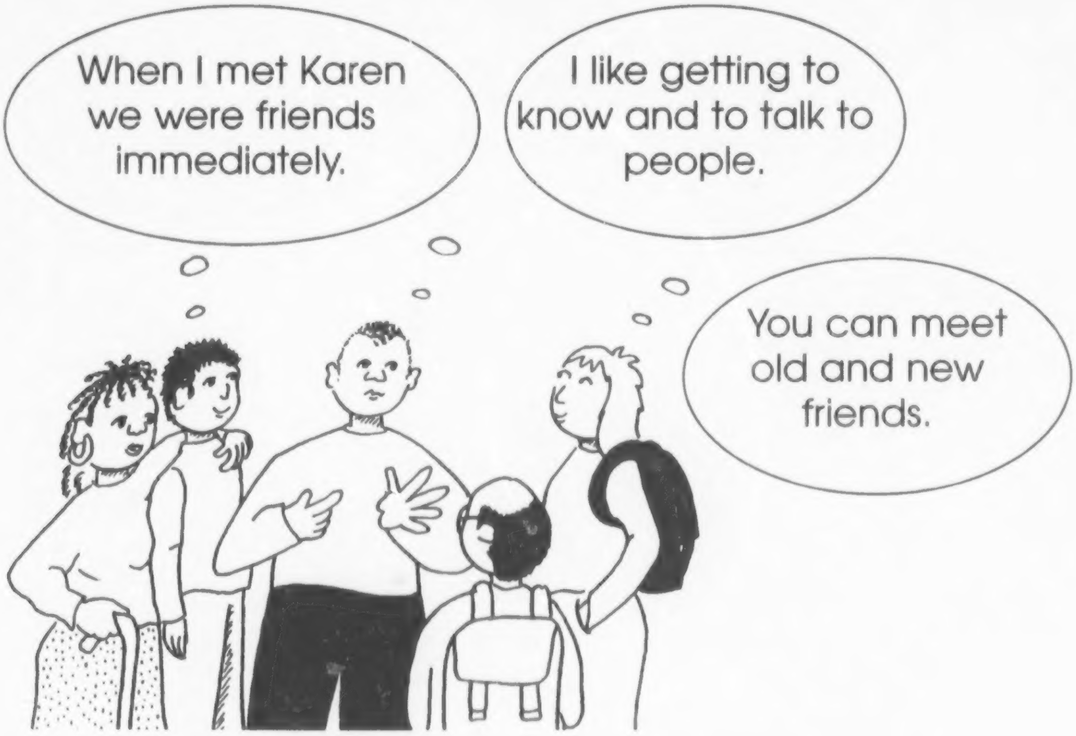
The right to have the chance to make friends


To mix with the crowd a little more and make new friends

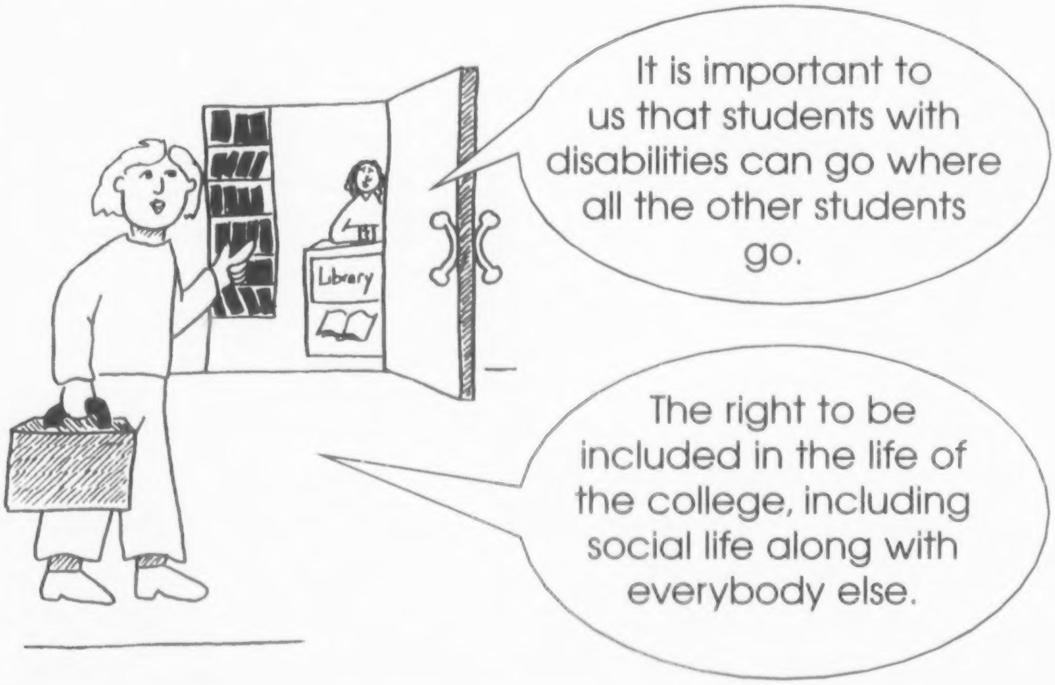
Having the chance to meet people and make friends is one of the things people like most about being a student:


A chance to chat and meet lots of different people.

© NIACE 2000


When I met Karen we were friends immediately.
I like getting to know and to talk to people.
You can meet old and new friends.

There are lots of different places in an adult education centre or college where students with learning difficulties can meet other students.

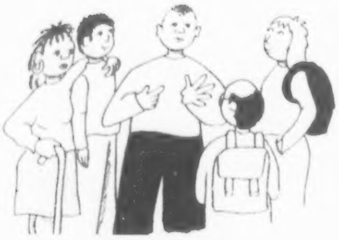

It is important to us that students with disabilities can go where all the other students go.
Library
The right to be included in the life of the college, including social life along with everybody else.

Student comments

Meeting other students:

- "In the learning centre we mix with all different students."
- "Other students talk with us and sit with us at break time and lunchtime."

- "In the canteen sometimes other mainstream students are difficult. Most are very friendly and helpful."
- "I work with mainstream students on the BTEC course."



- "Some students come up to us and talk, others just walk past and take no notice."
- "There are ordinary students in the canteen and foyer."

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Student comments

Some students with learning difficulties feel very much part of the life of their adult education centre or college and they enjoy this. Others don't feel so accepted.

Feeling part of things:

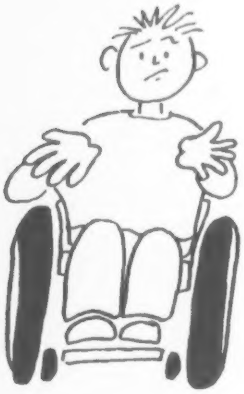
- "We definitely feel that we are part of college life. We feel that we are treated as equals, along with every other student at the college."

- "People know me here."
- "Some members said they felt different, but Pam said when she is on the hairdressing course she feels like other students. Ian felt the same when using computers."

- "We like the parties and discos."

Feeling separate

- "If I was on my own, non-disabled people talk to me but when I was with other people with learning difficulties they don't talk to me."



- "Other students see the wheelchair before they see me."

- "No one has been invited to join a student club."

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Feeling part of things is also about how comfortable and how welcome you feel at the place where you go to do your course.

Feeling welcome

It is the best place I've found. A very friendly place, very organised.

A friendly atmosphere – staff in the cafeteria are very helpful

We are made to feel very welcome when we come to college.

I am relaxed there, it's peaceful and calm.

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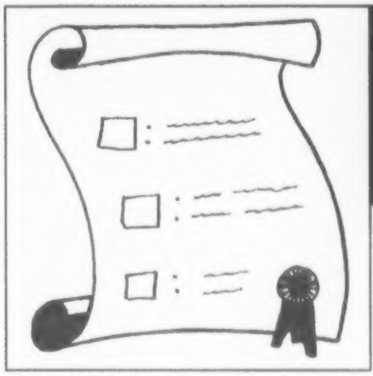
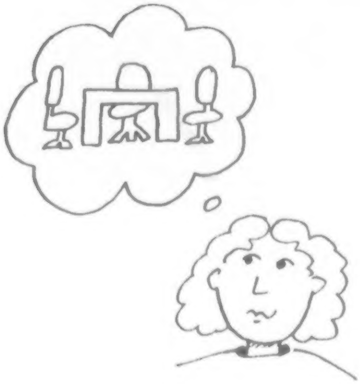
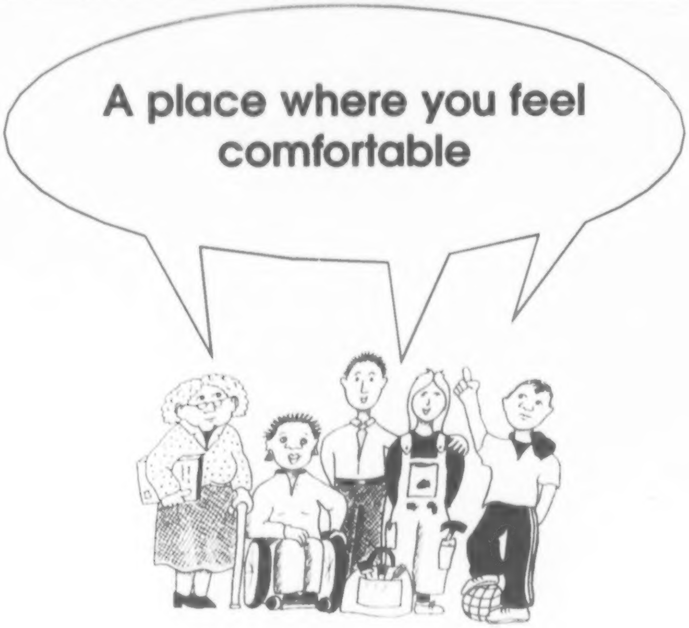


Charter Point

The right to learn in a nice place

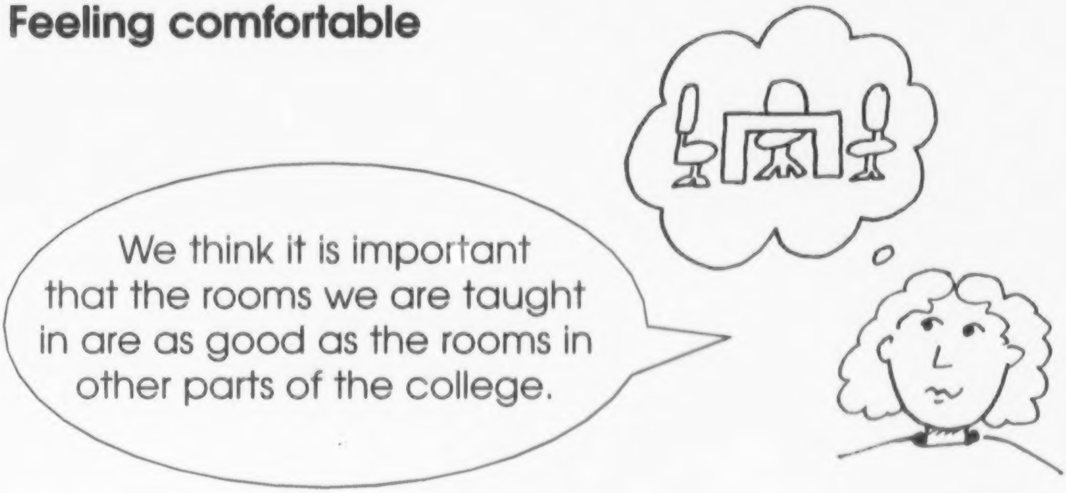


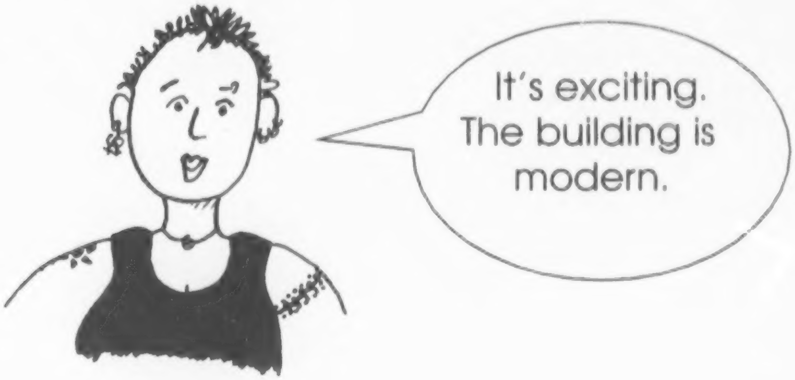

A place where you feel comfortable

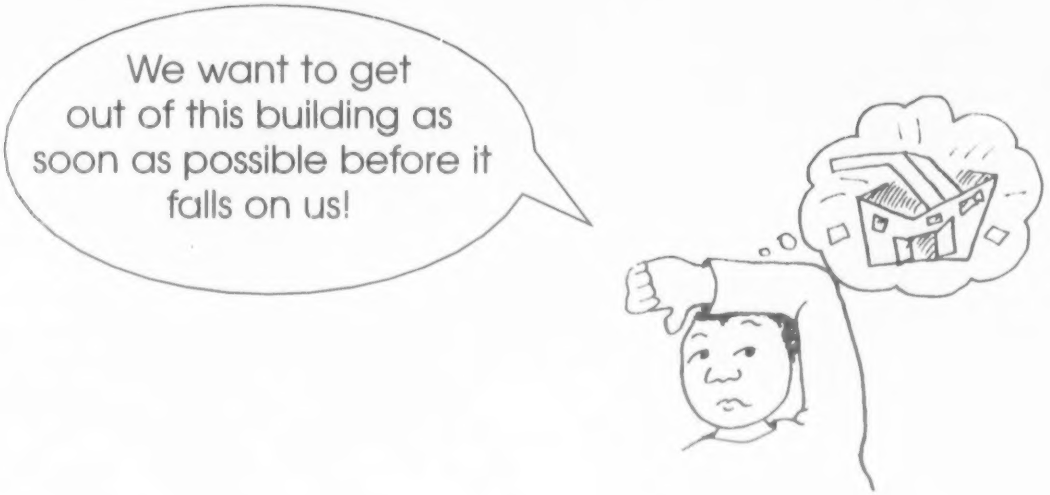
Feeling comfortable

Some students really liked the college or adult education centre where they did their courses. Others were not so happy.

Feeling comfortable


We think it is important that the rooms we are taught in are as good as the rooms in other parts of the college.


It's exciting. The building is modern.


We want to get out of this building as soon as possible before it falls on us!

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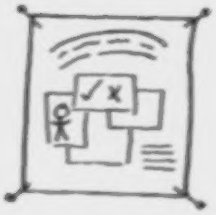
Student comments

People knew what they liked about the place where they go to do their courses. They also had lots of ideas about how things could be better.

What we like

- "Bright classrooms, light and airy."

- "Our computers are good ones. We don't want old ones that other people have finished with."



- "Posters and things make the room more comfortable."

- "A quiet room with no interruptions."

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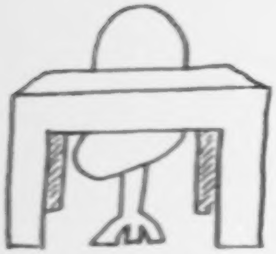
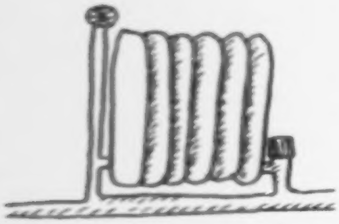
Student comments

What could be better



- "Bigger desks, a bigger room and more space."
- "Get some heaters here and get us warm!"



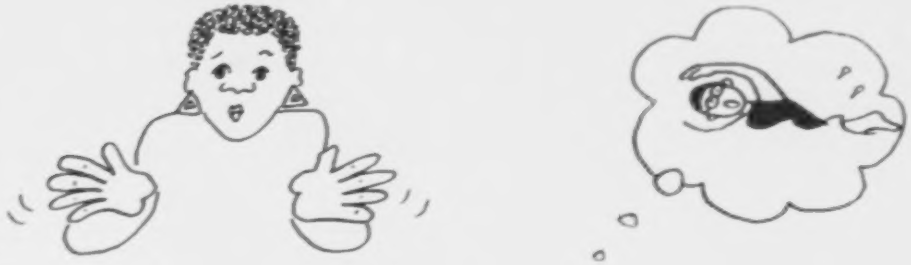
- "The furniture in the rooms should match, we don't want other people's rubbish."

- "The tables are too low in classrooms for wheelchair users."
- "The computers should work properly."

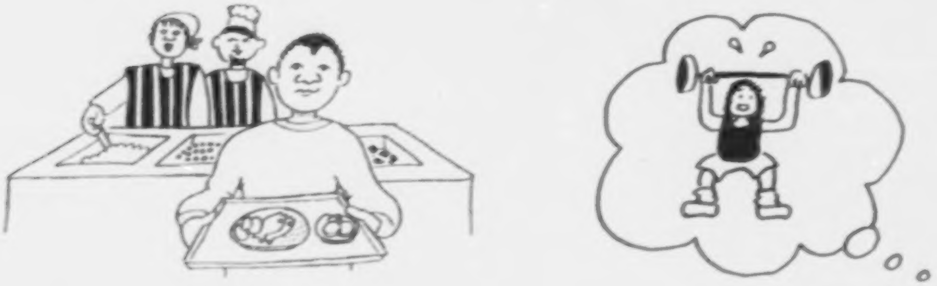
- "Computers that people with disabilities can use; voice activated, with an enlarger, tracker ball and a scanner."

In some places students with learning difficulties are not using the same facilities as other students:

- A group of students at one college did not know if there was a sports hall or swimming pool. One of the students said:
  "I suppose there must be because some people come to the canteen in shorts and trainers, but I don't know where they are."



- Students at an adult education centre did not use the gym or the canteen but some said that they wanted to.



In other places students with learning difficulties can use different facilities like the library, canteen and sports hall.

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Student comments

Places we use at college:

What is good

☑ "A good library, it has books, videos and tapes."

☑ "We like being able to go to the coffee bar and get drinks and meals and snacks. We can order the things we want and pay for them ourselves."

☑ "A student who doesn't see very well does drama and uses the theatre, they have altered the stage to make it easier to get on to a gentle slope. There is a device saying 'mind the edge' it warns people going too close. It is more accessible so you don't get tense on stage."

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What isn't so good

- "The canteen is too noisy. It's too busy."

- "Our adult education centre doesn't have a canteen. It would be nice to have somewhere to go for lunch…"
- "It needs to be less crowded in the canteen for wheelchair users."

- "People who use wheelchairs can't reach the drinks machine."
- "Wheelchair users cannot get into the library in my college."
- "I don't like people smoking in the corridors and the canteen."

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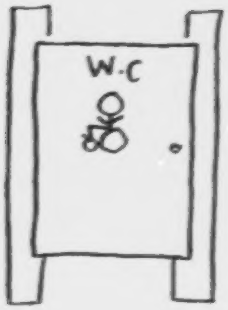
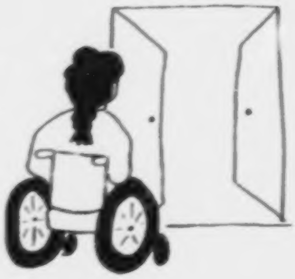
How things could be better



- "More toilets for people who use wheelchairs because they are a long way from some classes."

- "There should be yellow or white lines painted on the stairs for people who are blind or find it hard to see."

- "A common room to relax."
- "More automatic doors for wheelchair users."
- "We need a recovery/rest room for people with epilepsy."



- "There should be facilities for students with severe disabilities."

Questions to think about

Staff

Do students with learning difficulties have a chance to mix with other students in all parts of the college or adult education centre?

How can social events such as discos, trips out and clubs be planned so students with learning difficulties can join in?

How are students supported to join in with social events who:

- Have severe disabilities?
- Don't see well or who are blind?
- Use wheelchairs?
- Are deaf?

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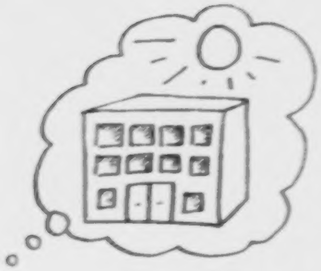
Questions to think about



Students and staff

How can you make your building(s) welcoming for students with learning difficulties?

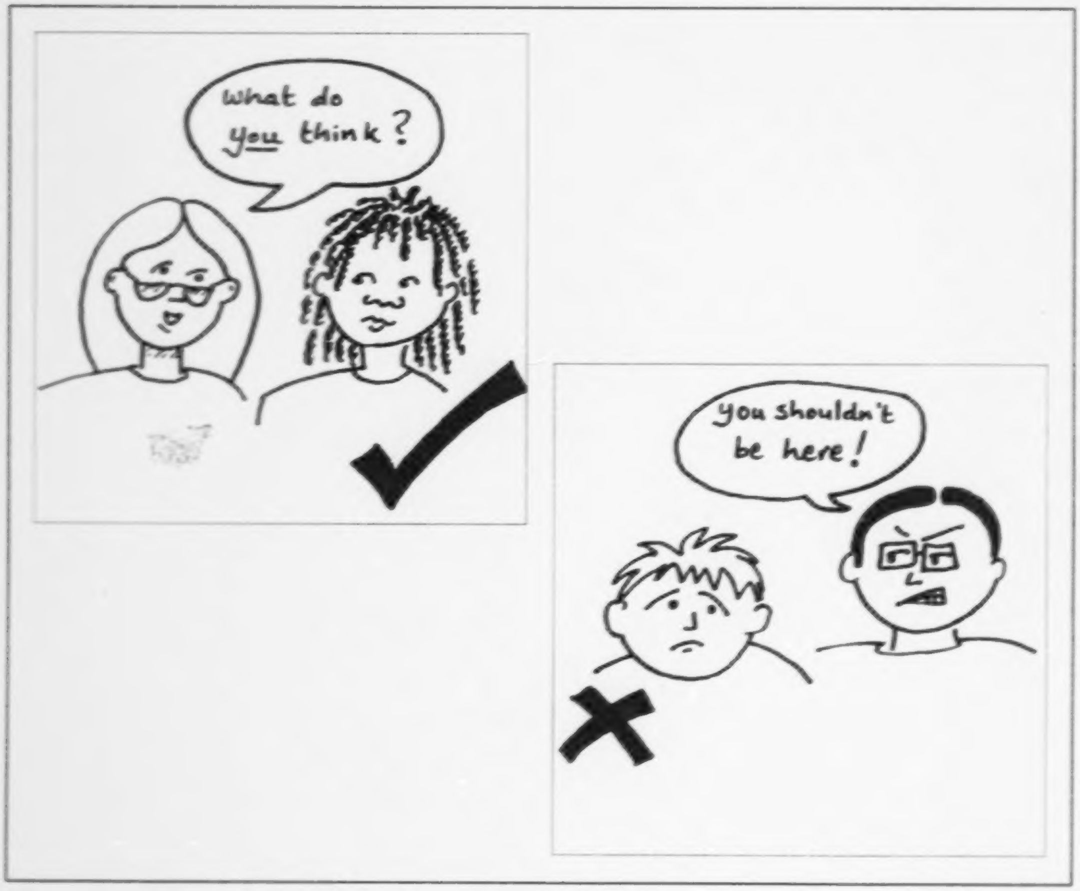
Can students with learning difficulties use the same facilities as other students?

What can be done to support students to use facilities who:

- Have severe disabilities?
- Don't see well or who are blind?
- Use wheelchairs?
- Are deaf?

Chapter 6

Respect and bullying


What do you think?
You shouldn't be here!

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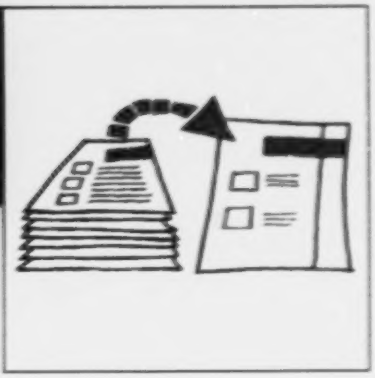
About this chapter

Respect and bullying



In this chapter people with learning difficulties talked about being treated with respect, bullying and feeling safe.

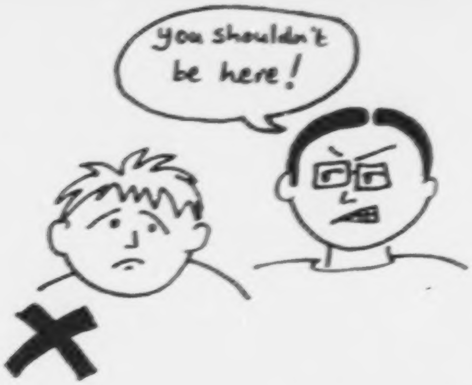
What do you think ?

The right to be treated as adults with respect

"Talk to us like adults"

- People with learning difficulties wanted to be treated with respect by other students and staff.
- People with learning difficulties wanted to be treated as equals with other students.

About this chapter


you shouldn't be here!

The right not to be bullied

"Cut out bullying – everybody equal"

- Many people with learning difficulties have been bullied at the place where they learn. Bullying must stop.

- It is important that people know where to go to get help if they are being bullied.

- Staff should know how to help students who are being bullied and how to stop bullying happening.

- People with learning difficulties want to feel safe in other ways for example, knowing what to do when there is a fire drill or fire alarm.

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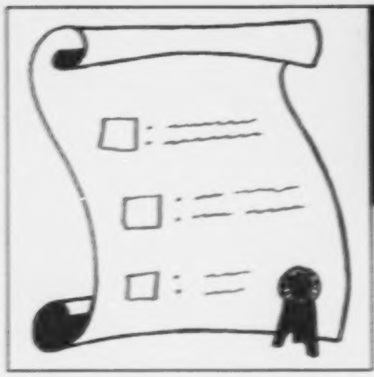
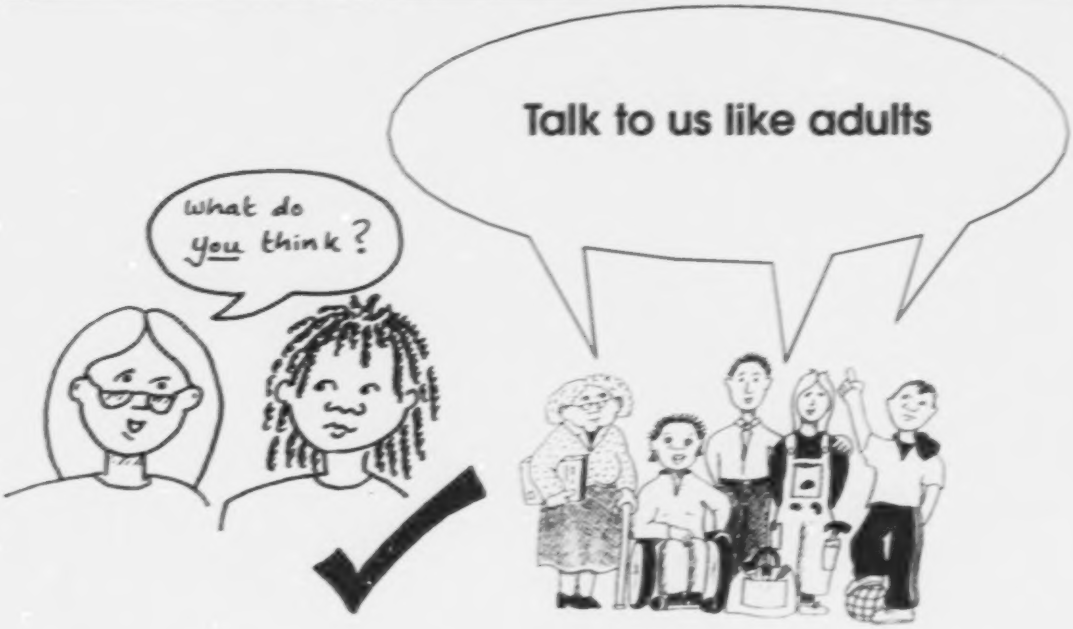


Charter Point

The right to be treated as adults with respect


Talk to us like adults
what do you think?

How people treat you can make you feel good or bad. People with learning difficulties think that being treated with respect as an adult, is an important part of learning and being a student. It can make you feel confident about yourself and about what you will be able to learn.

If you are not treated well and you feel bad about yourself it can make you feel unsure and worried that you will find it difficult to learn.

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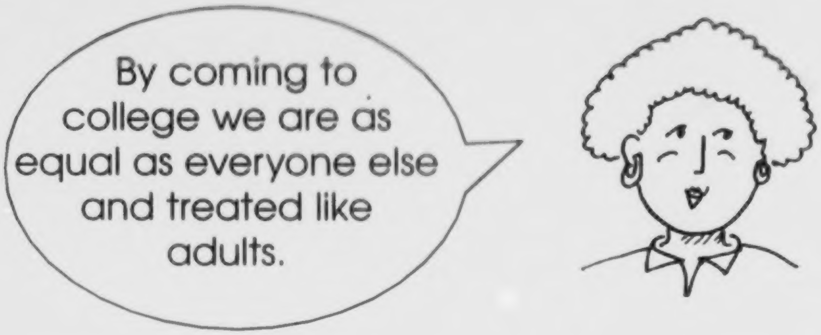
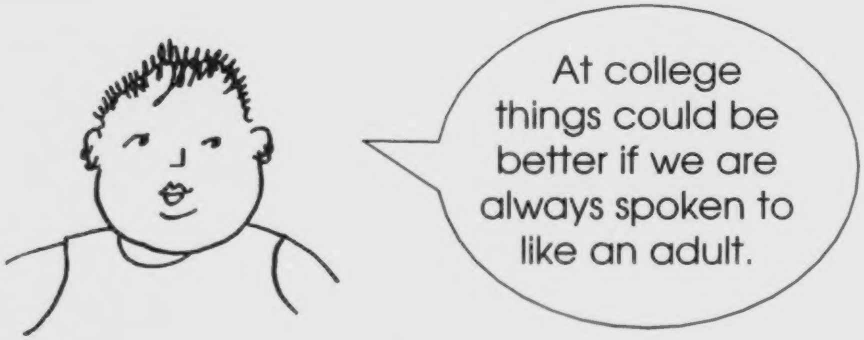
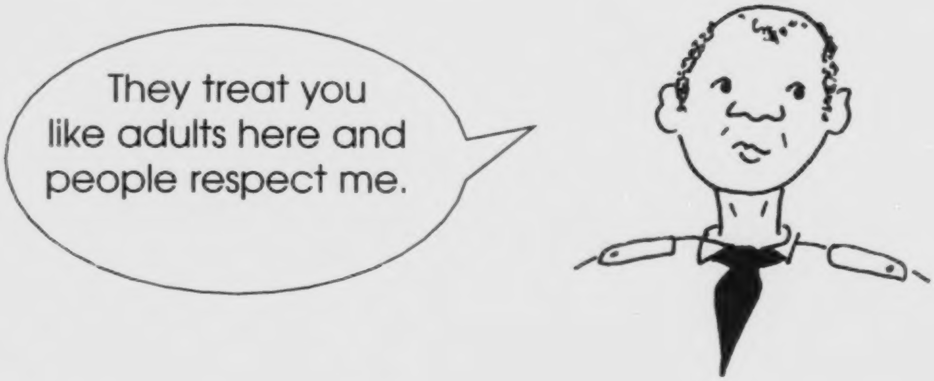

By coming to college we are as equal as everyone else and treated like adults.


At college things could be better if we are always spoken to like an adult.


They treat you like adults here and people respect me.

© NIACE 2000

Student comments

People with learning difficulties want to be treated with respect as adults by staff, other students and each other.

How we should be treated.
Treat us like adults:

☑ "People should respect our confidentiality, treat us like adults, ask our opinions, and listen and take action on them."

☑ "We get work that is written for learners who are adults not children."

☑ "Staff talk to us like adults and don't treat us like 4 to 5 year olds."

☑ "It is important that people talk to us like they talk to other people."

☑ "If staff talk to our parents they should ask our permission."

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Student comments

☒ "Other students laugh at me."

☒ "I don't like being called Special Needs."

☒ "I want people not to stare and treat us as stupid."

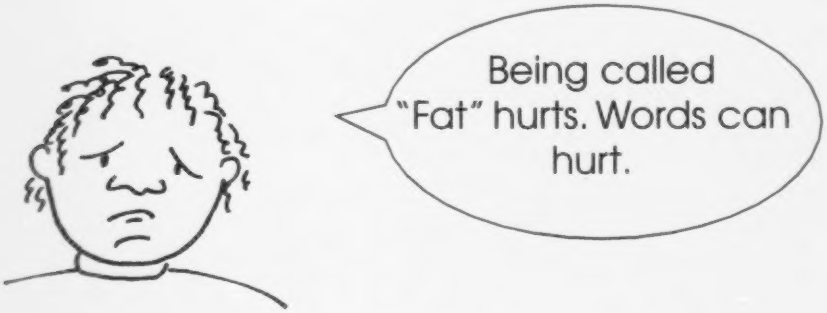
Respect:

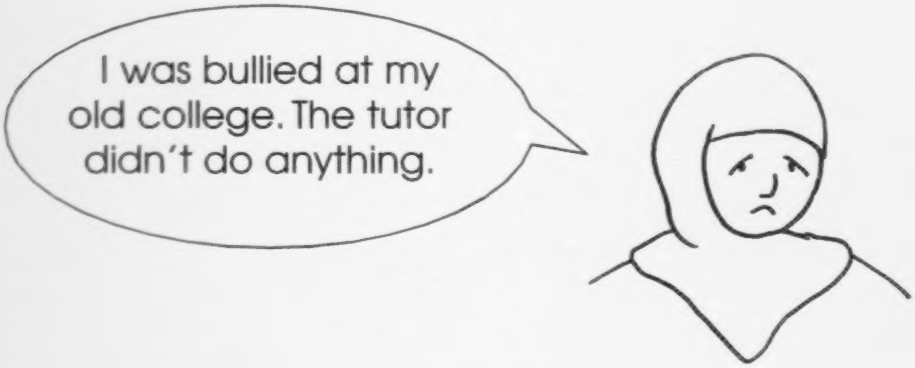
- "Respect all students as adults with equal rights."
- "There should be respect between students and tutors."
- "Respect us for what we are."

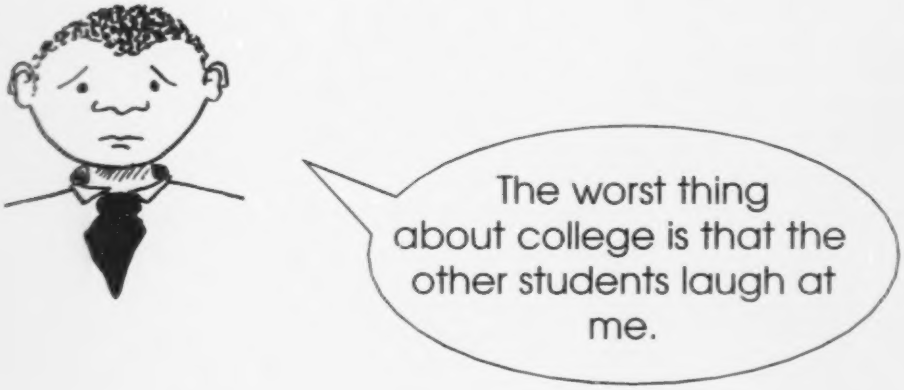
Rights
Respect

Bullying

Many people with learning difficulties talked about being bullied at the place where they go to learn.

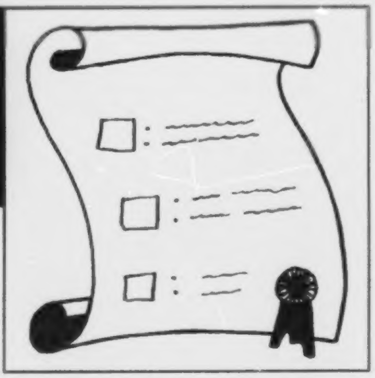

Being called "Fat" hurts. Words can hurt.


I was bullied at my old college. The tutor didn't do anything.

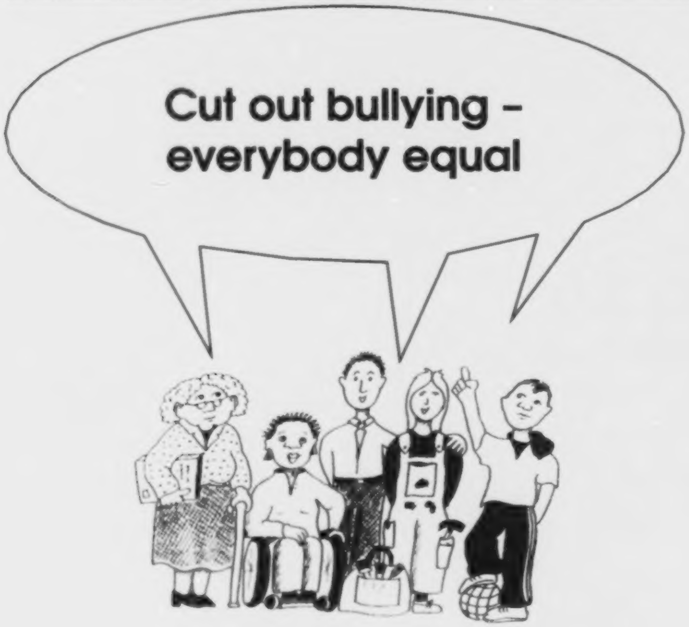

The worst thing about college is that the other students laugh at me.

© NIACE 2000

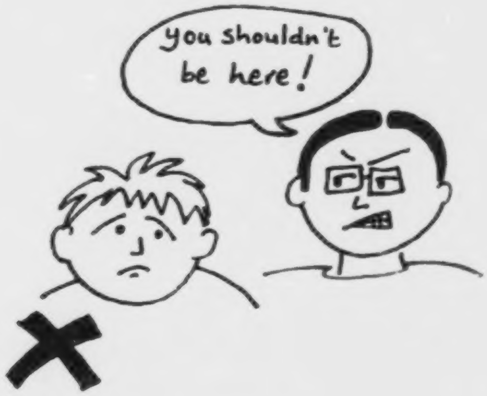
Charter Point



The right not to be bullied

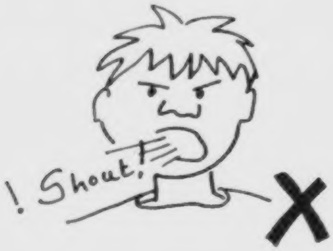

Cut out bullying – everybody equal

People want bullying stopped. They want staff to do something about it.

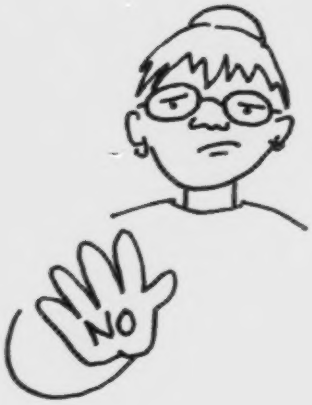

You shouldn't be here!

Student comments

Talking about bullying:



- "It's rude shouting, using language and racial remarks."
- "It is important that no-one is allowed to touch us and hurt us."



- "Students should be protected from bullying."
- "When you are a student you should be going somewhere where you know you are not going to be picked on."
- "No bullying, it is dangerous!"
- "College should be friendly, there should be no bullying."

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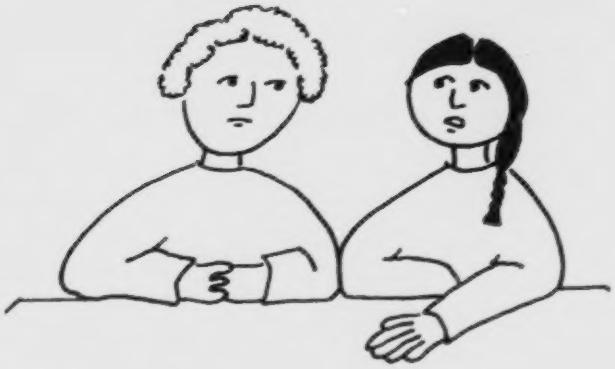
Student comments



What can be done?

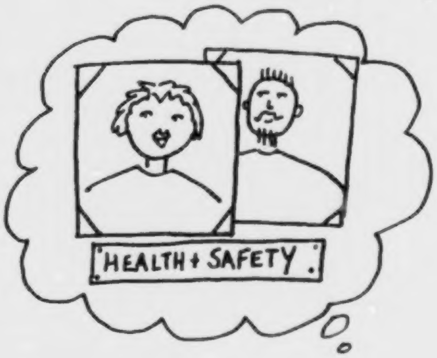
- "Having someone to help you deal with problems with other students if they are teasing you."

- "You can go and talk to one of the staff."

- "Problems need to be sorted out with understanding before they get out of hand."

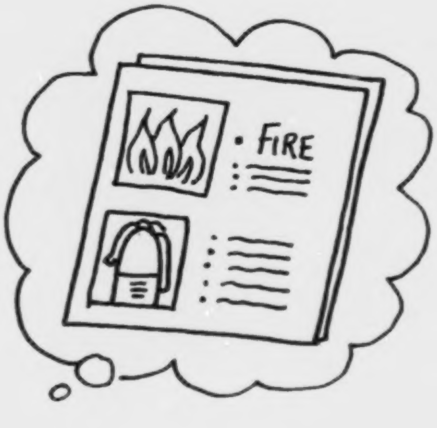
Feeling safe in other ways

People who sent in their ideas for the Charter for Learning talked about how important it is to know about the fire drills and health and safety issues.



We should know who the health and safety officers are, and they should explain things to us.

Students need more information on health and safety and fire procedures.



We do fire drills. It is important.

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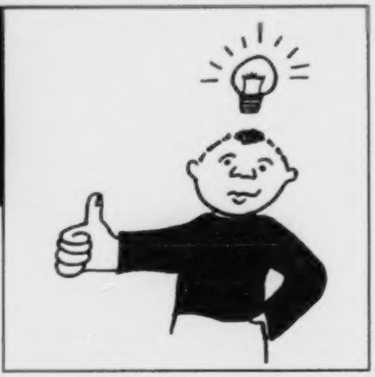
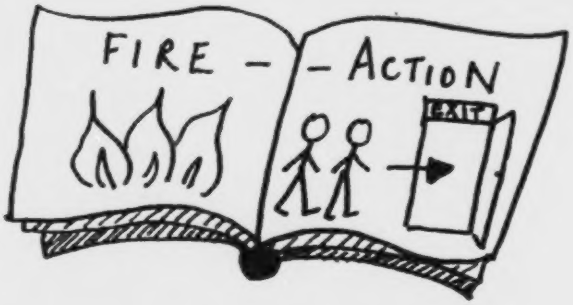
Charter ideas in action



Clear information about fire drills

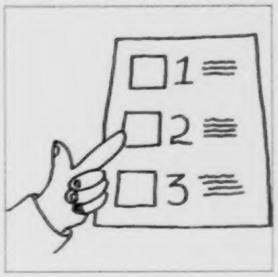


Students at **The Adult College Lancaster** made a "Student Guide" for students with learning difficulties as they found the general "College Guide" difficult to understand. The Guide has a section called "Fire Action". It uses photos and large print with clear words and explains what to do when there is a fire drill.

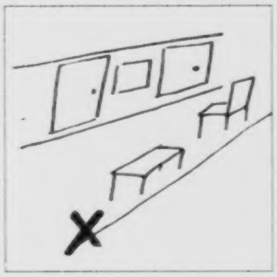
Health and Safety

Students at SITE at the **City Lit** in London have an advisory group. At the meetings of the advisory group students can talk about all sorts of things including health and safety issues at the college.

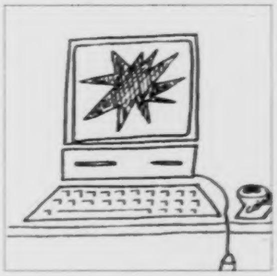
Staff at meetings take notes of what has been said. They work with the students to make sure their ideas are heard and action is taken to change things.



Things the group has talked about have included:



- furniture in the corridors making it dangerous for people who can't see or find it hard to see to get about and which is a fire risk
- damage done to equipment in the classrooms
- problems with the bad behaviour of other students.



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Questions to think about

Staff

Rights
Respect

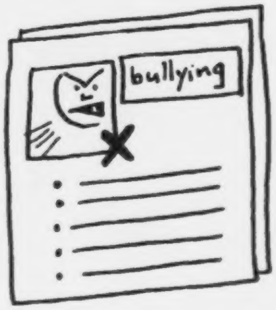
How do staff know if students feel they are being treated with respect and as adults by:

- tutors?
- other students?
- support staff?
- staff who work in the canteen, library or on reception?

Students and staff

If there is a problem with bullying:

- Is there a policy against bullying and is it presented in a way that is clear for everyone to understand?



- Are there clear guidelines about what will happen if someone is being bullied?
- Do you know what students feel about bullying and how it is dealt with?

FIRE –
– ACTION
EXIT

Are the instructions for fire drills and forms for reporting other health and safety matters presented in a clear way that everyone can understand?

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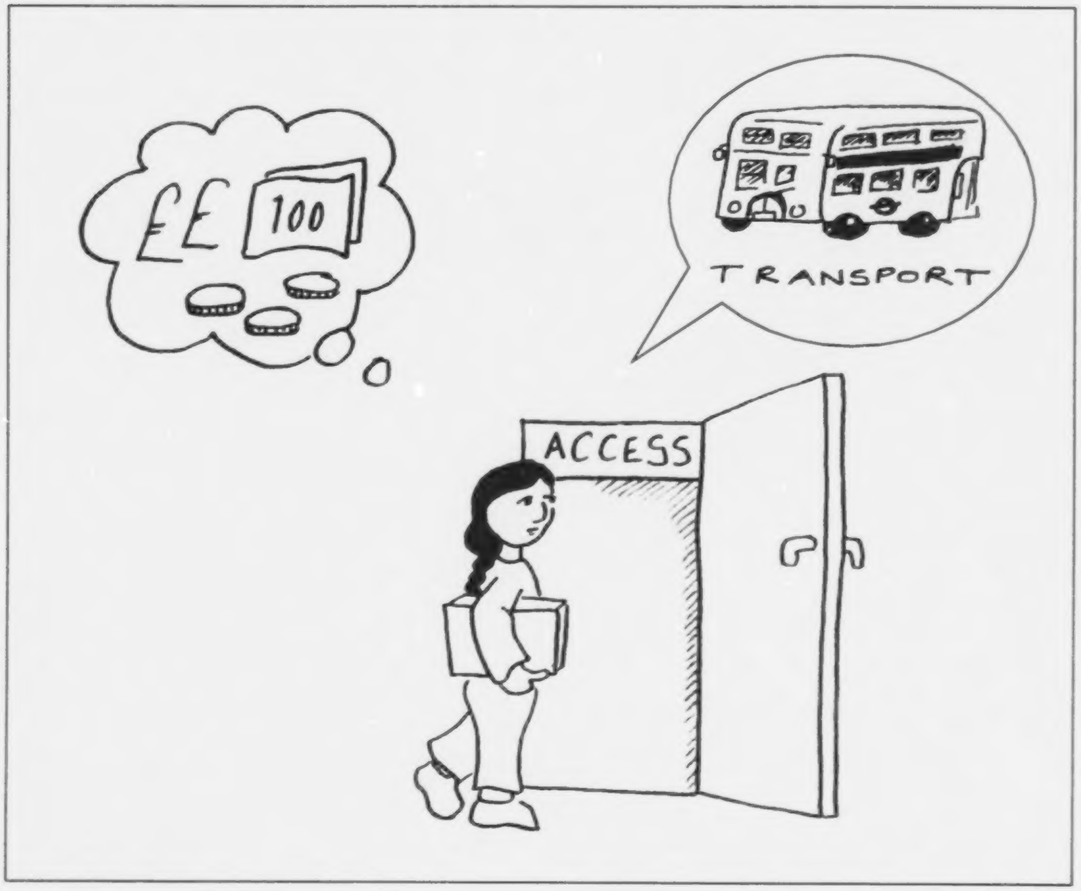
Chapter 7

Access to learning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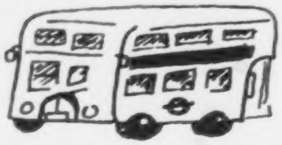
TRANSPORT
ACCESS

About this chapter

Access to learning

In this chapter people with learning difficulties talk about transport, access and the cost of being a student.



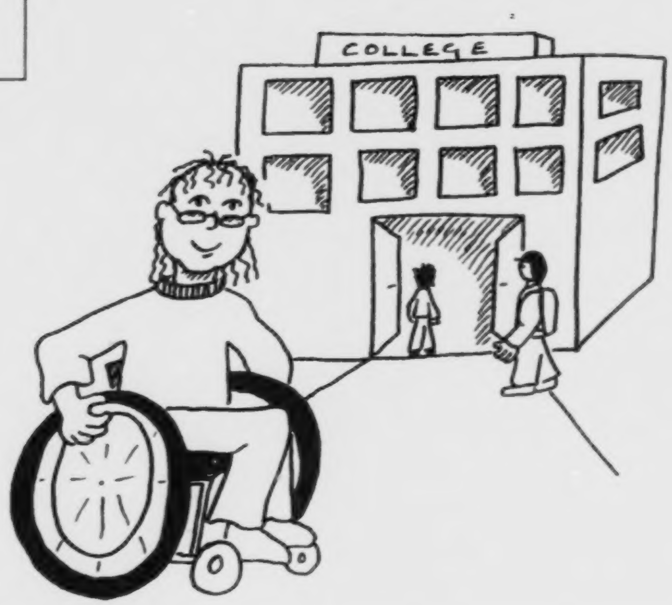
Transport

- Some people travel on their own to classes. Other people have help with travelling.
- Transport to college or an adult education centre is often late.
- Sometimes there is not enough transport or none at all. This means that people cannot get to classes.

The cost of being a student

- Being a student can cost a lot and most people with learning difficulties are on a low income and don't have a lot of money.
- There should be help for people with learning difficulties to pay for the cost of their courses, admin fees and certificates.

About this chapter



The right to good access

"Lifts, ramps, more room for wheelchairs"

- A lot of people find getting into and around college difficult.

- Students can meet with staff and managers to talk to them about access problems and what can be done to make access easier.

Transport - getting to college

Students use many different kinds of transport to get to their classes:

- Taxi

- Car
- Bus

- Social Services mini-bus
- Underground

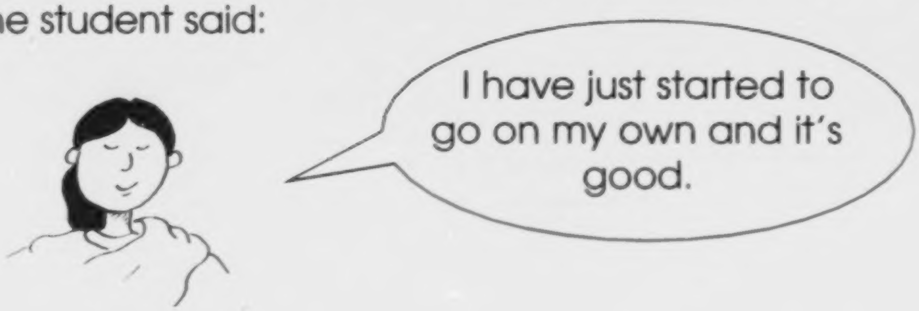
- Train

- Walk

- Community Transport
- Bike

- Dial a Ride

Some students travel on their own. Students from **"Your Voice Now"** Self Advocacy Group at **Codsall Day Centre** are learning to use buses. They are supported by the staff until they feel confident and safe enough to travel on their own. One student said:


I have just started to go on my own and it's good.

There are courses where students can learn about travelling. They learn things like how to recognise the numbers of buses and road safety.

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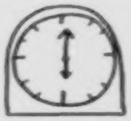
Student comments

Many people travel from their day centre to the adult education centre or college where they do their classes. There are some things that can make their journeys difficult.

Problems with transport:

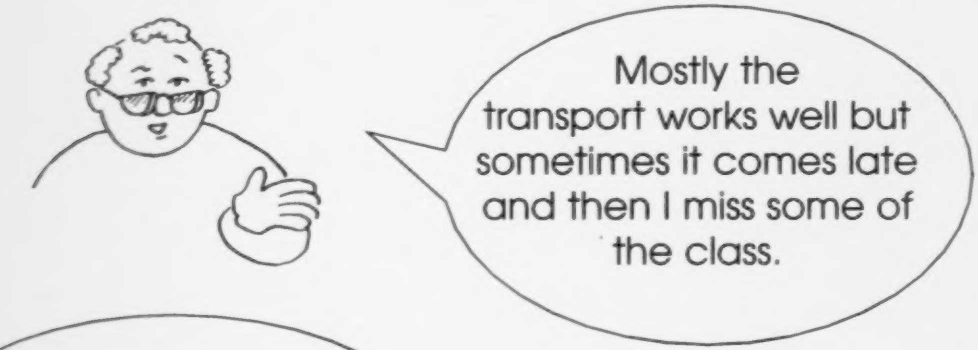
- "If staff are off sick or on courses you have to find another driver."
- "Sometimes the bus breaks down."
- "You are often late to class if your bus or taxi has to take other people to other places first."

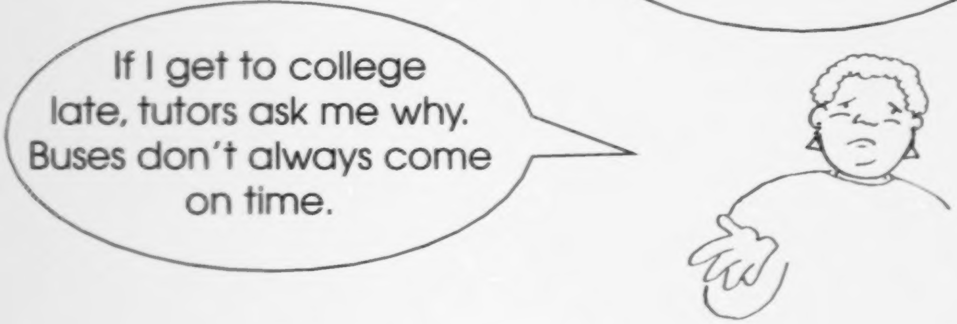


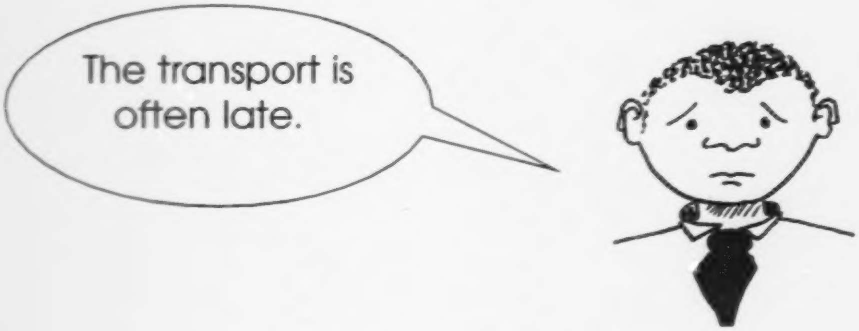
- "We wait around a lot if the taxis are late."
- "Being picked up too early."

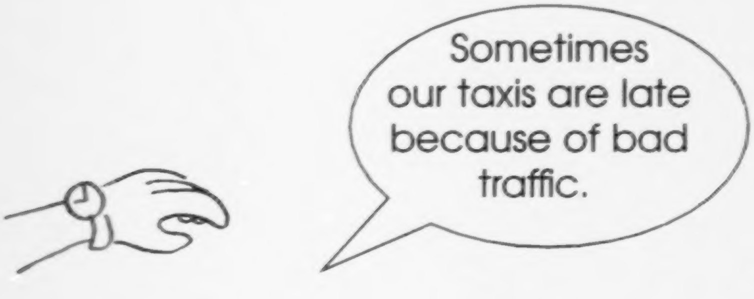
- "Transport ends at 6pm so students can't get involved in other college activities."
- "If you can't get transport, you can't come to class."

Other students travel with help from support workers, parents or volunteers. Whatever kind of transport people use, on their own or with help, sometimes it is late.


Mostly the transport works well but sometimes it comes late and then I miss some of the class.


If I get to college late, tutors ask me why. Buses don't always come on time.


The transport is often late.

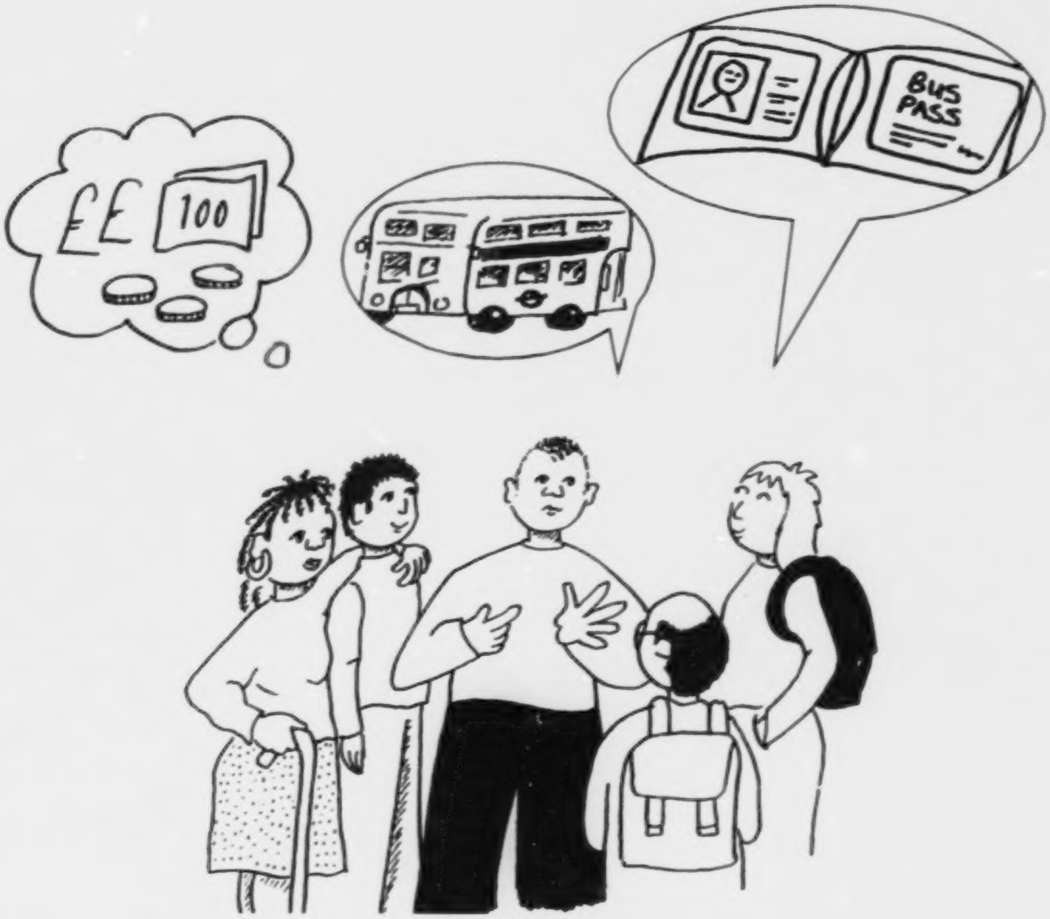

Sometimes our taxis are late because of bad traffic.

The cost of being a student

People First of Norfolk think that students with learning difficulties should have a right to:

"Help with travelling expenses and with registration fees."

Some students can travel free with a bus pass, others say that they need help with their fares to college. At one Adult Education College, students wanted door to door transport and said that they would pay towards the cost.



Student comments

Some people felt that being a student can cost a lot.

The cost of being a student:

- "A right to cheaper course fees for people on benefit."
- "There should be more courses for people on low income."
- "The admin fee has gone up by £10.00. It is now too much for me to afford."
- "People may not be able to afford to go to college if they are on low income."
- "The trips from college are too expensive."
- "We shouldn't have to pay for our certificates, they cost a lot of money."
- "We should have free education because many of us missed going to school when we were younger because of illness."

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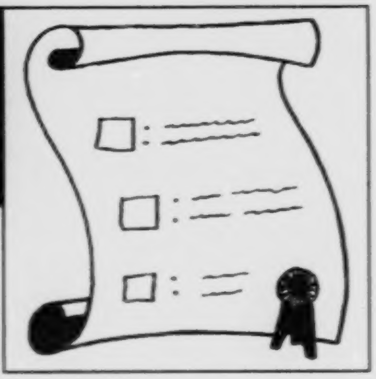
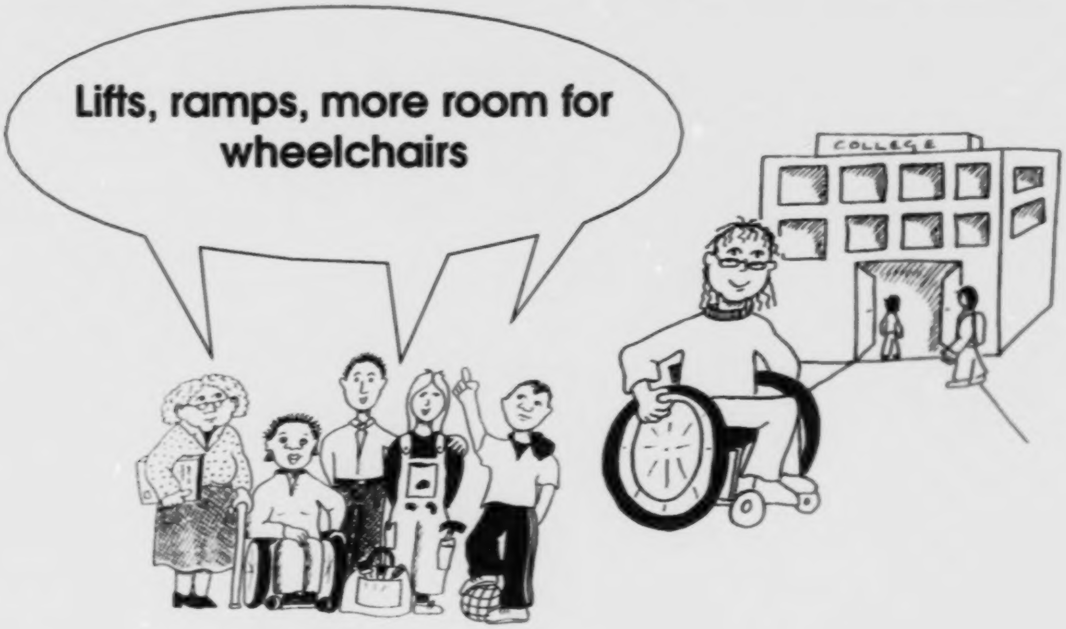
Charter Point



The right to good access


Lifts, ramps, more room for wheelchairs
COLLEGE

Access – getting into and around college

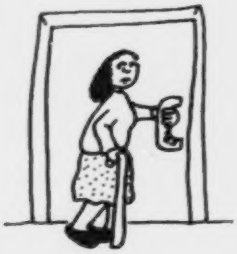
Access is something that **North Herts People First** feel very strongly about.

"All colleges should be made fully accessible for everyone by 2004."

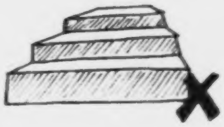
Student comments

In the charter leaflet we asked people what could be better about the place where they were students. A lot of people wanted access to be improved.

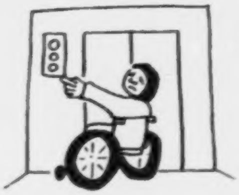
Problems with access



- "The doors are hard to open by yourself."



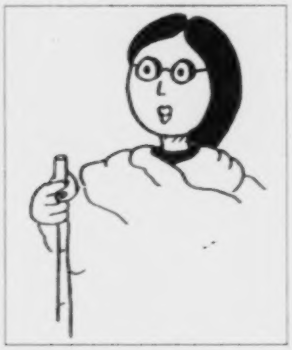
- "There are too many steps and some students have difficulty managing the stairs."



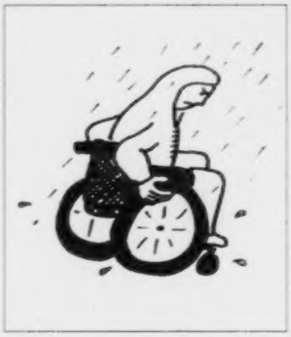
- "Going up in the lift is not easy, I have to ask my friends to help me."

Student comments

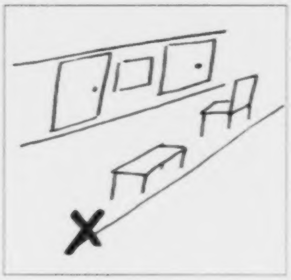
Problems with access



- "If it is a bit dark or a place that I don't know, it is difficult."



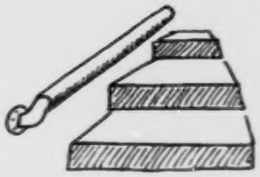
- "Some students who use wheelchairs can't get to buildings unless they go outside. This must be horrid in bad weather."



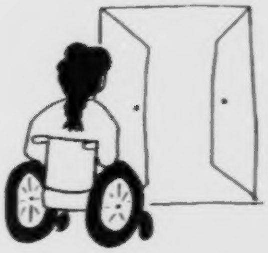
- "A student who can't see very well said that she did not like coming across things that were in the way in the corridors."

How can access be made better?

- "It's good to have rails for the stairs."



- "More room in the car park to drop people off."
- "More ramps."
- "More automatic doors for people who use wheelchairs."

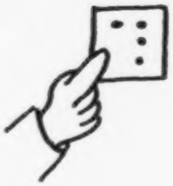


What helps?

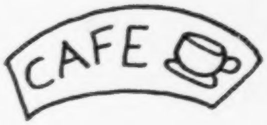
☑ "Staff on the help desk help you."

☑ "It is easy to find your way around college, some students are very helpful."

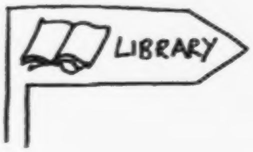
☑ "White lines and clear signs for visually impaired students and students who find it hard to read."



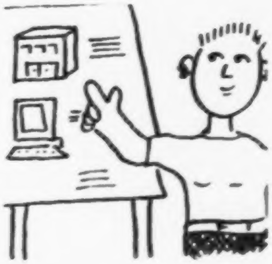
☑ "It would help if it is light, there are big numbers on the door like CAFE in big letters, someone to show you around and people to ask."



☑ "Need better sign posting – signs with symbols and pictures."



☑ "The induction class helped me find my way around."



☑ "On the first day, students who had been there already were our guides around college."

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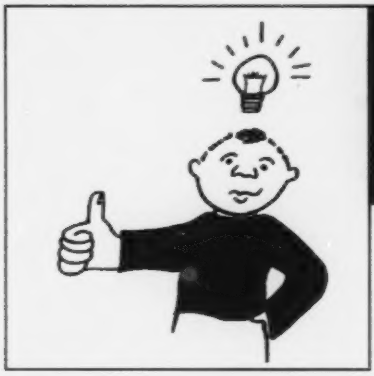
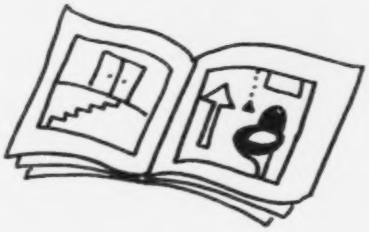


Charter ideas in action

The English and Creative Computing class at **The Adult College in Lancaster** made their own **Student Guide** to the college. The guide uses photos and symbols to show where the toilets, reception, classrooms and coffee bar can be found.



Students at **High Peak College** have regular meetings with a member of staff to talk about access issues in the college.

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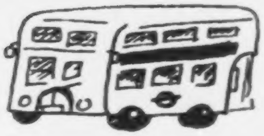
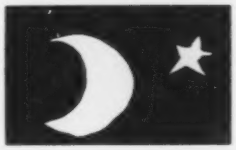
Questions to think about

Staff

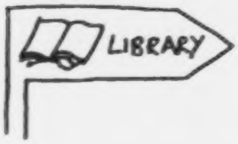
Is it possible to work with other agencies and improve transport for students with learning difficulties?



Can transport run in the evening with volunteers or Dial a Ride so students can join in evening college activities?

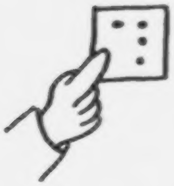


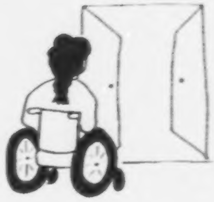
Has there been an access survey recently at the college or adult education centre where you work? Could you carry out an access audit with the help of students?



How easy is it for students to find their way around college who:

- Can't read?
- Have partial sight or are blind?
- Have limited mobility?
- Do not speak English as their first language?





How can students on low income be helped with the costs of being a student?

Students and staff

Can students and staff work together and make a guide that would be clear and easy for everyone to understand?

Do you know what students think about the cost of being a student?

I think
I think

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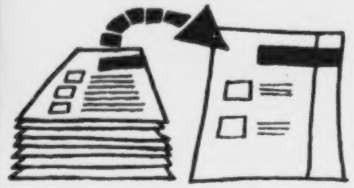
Chapter 8

Teaching

About this chapter



Teaching

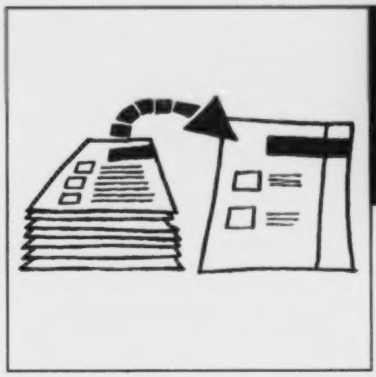
This chapter looks at what people with learning difficulties have to say about teaching and knowing how they are getting on with their learning.

The right to have good teaching

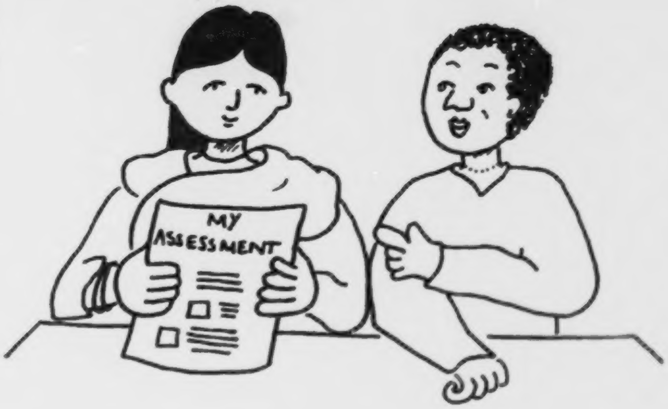
"You need a good teacher to help you learn"

- People with learning difficulties want tutors to be well qualified to work with students with learning difficulties.

- Tutors should use teaching materials that are for adults not children. Materials have to be easy to understand for all students, including students who find it difficult to read.



About this chapter



Moving on – progression

- People with learning difficulties want their learning to lead to something. They don't want to do the same courses year after year.

Assessments and reviews – knowing how you are getting on

- People with learning difficulties want to know how they are getting on with their learning.

- Students with learning difficulties want to be involved in their own assessments and reviews of their learning.

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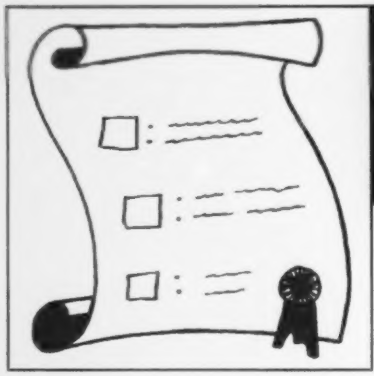
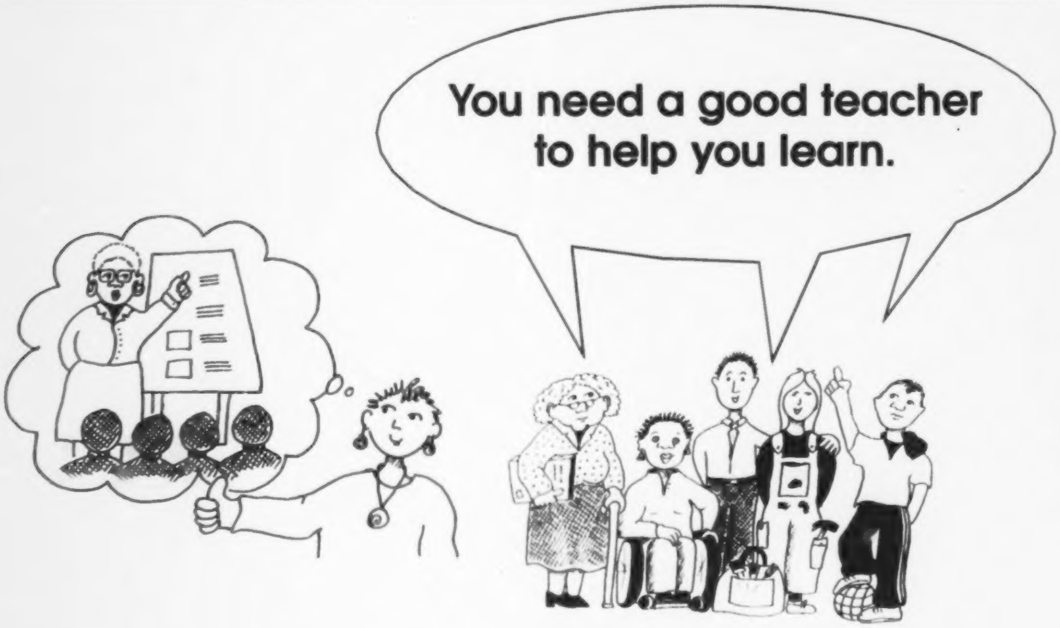
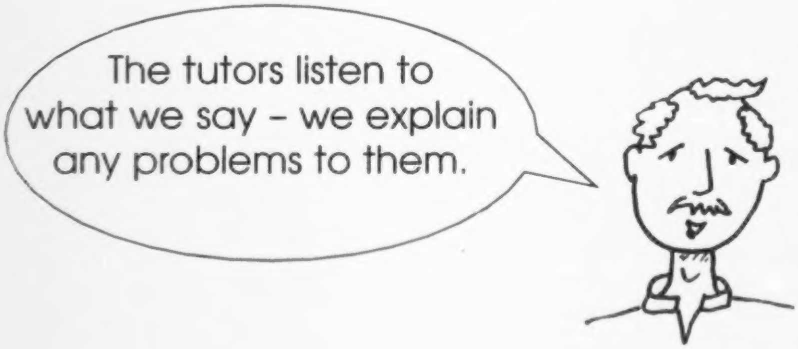


Charter Point

The right to have good teaching


You need a good teacher to help you learn.

Many of the people who sent in information for the Charter for Learning had good things to say about their tutors.


The tutors listen to what we say - we explain any problems to them.

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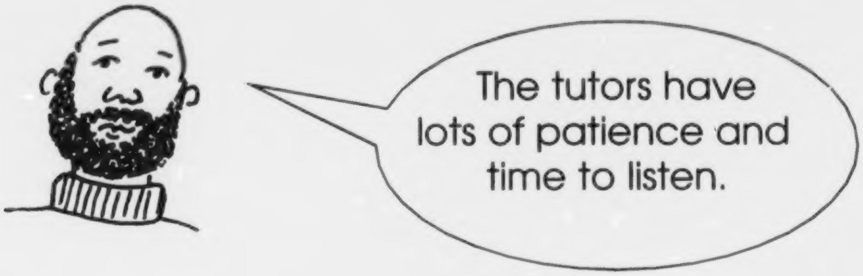
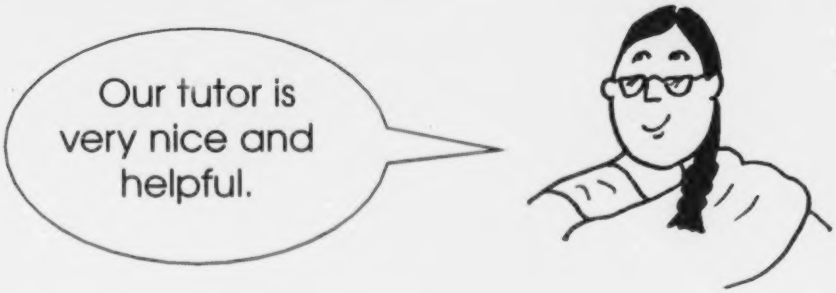
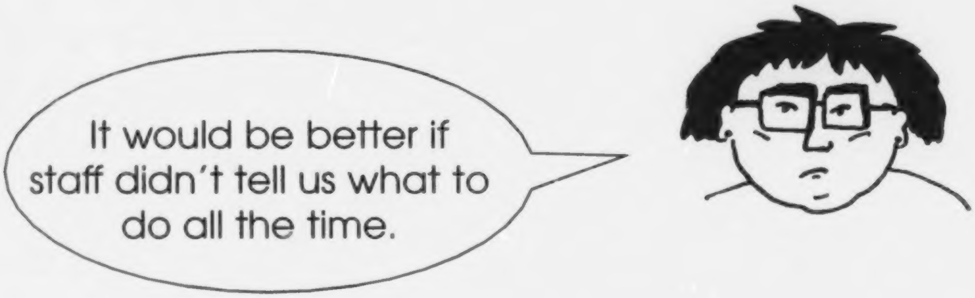
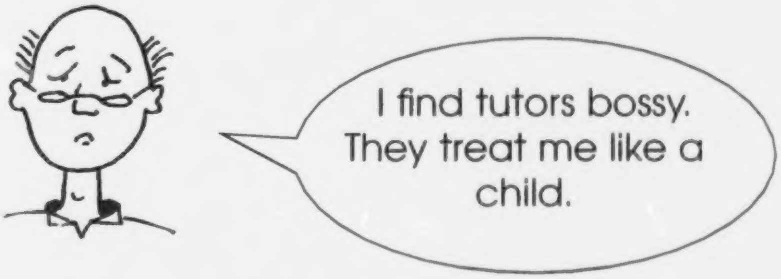

The tutors have lots of patience and time to listen.


Our tutor is very nice and helpful.

Some people were not so happy with their tutors.


It would be better if staff didn't tell us what to do all the time.


I find tutors bossy. They treat me like a child.

Student comments

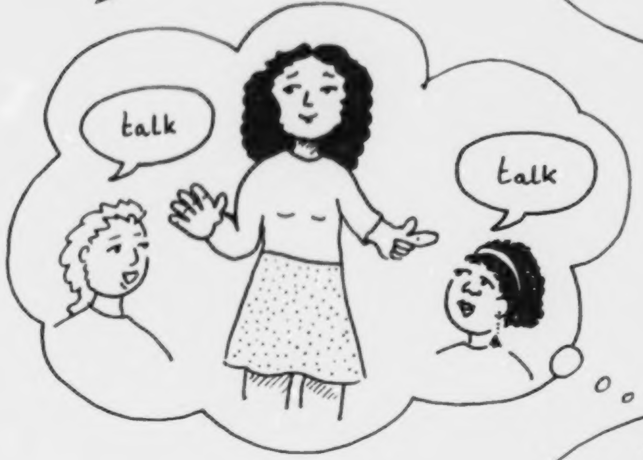
We want tutors to be:

- "Understanding, so there is no communication breakdown."
- "Have a sense of humour."
- "Friendly, kind and patient."
- "Specially trained and used to people with learning disabilities."
- "Someone who isn't going to shout at you."
- " A well qualified tutor is good."

People talked about how they wanted tutors to treat them. They had ideas about how tutors can help students with learning difficulties to learn.

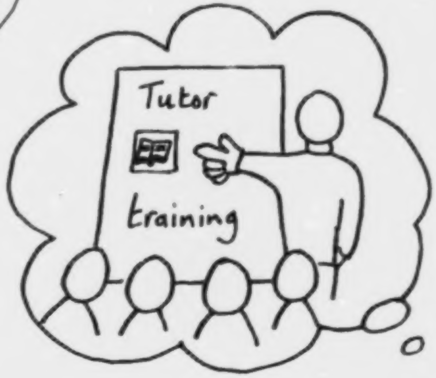
Too much noise is distracting – the tutor has to be firm.

It should be one person at a time, not too many students talking at once.



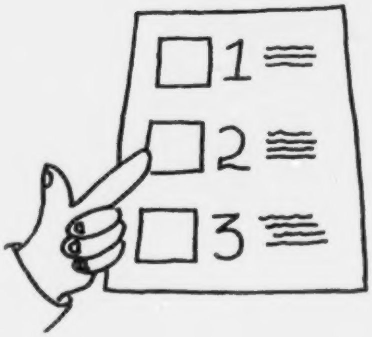
Tutors should be trained by a self-advocacy organisation.

When students are taught they should be treated like normal students, as students of the same age who have not got disabilities.



Student comments

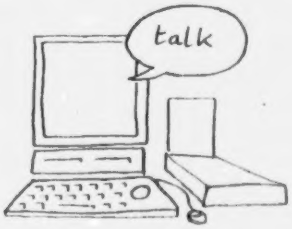
Tutors help us learn when they:



- "Use a language I understand, a way of teaching I understand, lessons in small bits."
- "Respect the fact that I don't learn as quickly as others."

talking
Listening

- "Listen to you when you are talking."
- "Give me a chance to ask for help and explanations."



- "Give us a chance to use computers and the Internet."
- "Let students with disabilities have a go."

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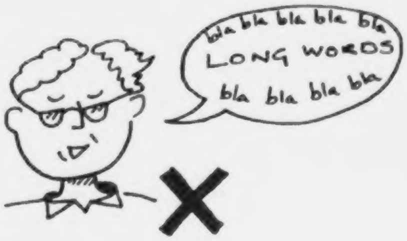
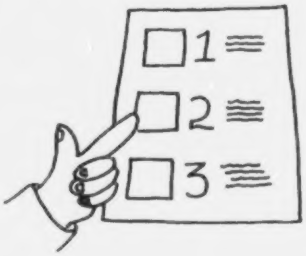
Tutors help us learn when they

- "Check we understand."
- "Speak clearly and loudly."
- "Explain things properly and in lots of different ways."

- "Know what they are talking about."
- "Encourage you."
- "Don't use big words."


bla bla bla bla bla
LONG WORDS
bla bla bla bla

- "Help you learn by not going too fast."
- "Break information down into small chunks."

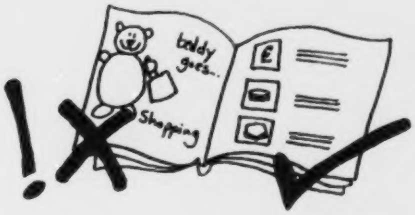


- "Use different types of activities to help you concentrate."

Student comments

Teaching materials

There are lots of different kinds of teaching materials like videos, books, tapes and worksheets. Students with learning difficulties want to use materials which they can understand, that help them learn and are meant for adults.



- "We need materials that are age-appropriate, so we are not getting materials aged at people who are ten or eleven."

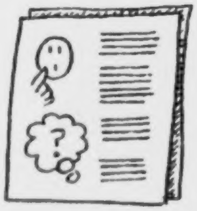
Worksheets and books

Big and easy to read

☑ "There are pictures as well as writing on the worksheets."

☑ "Writing is big and easy to read."

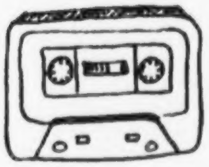
☑ "Worksheets are printed on paper that is coloured not white, if we can't read black print on white paper."



☑ "Enlarged worksheets with symbols and pictures."

☑ "Easy to read books."

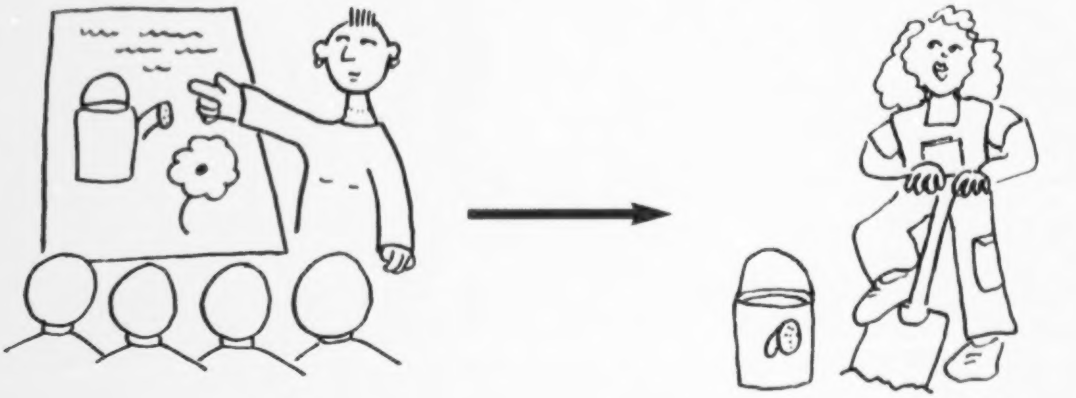
Learning materials for students who don't read



- "If a student cannot read, material might be put onto a cassette tape."
- "Work is read to us if we cannot read it ourselves."
- "Use pictures and symbols as part of total communication."

Moving on – Progression

The chance to learn more and move on to other things is an important part of being a student. People with learning difficulties don't want to be on the same course year after year. Learning has to lead somewhere.



Student comments

Progression, Moving on

☑ "This place makes me want to find out more and more and more about things."

☑ "In computers I have learnt how to print what is on the screen, this has helped me as I am Secretary of the self-advocacy group."

☑ "I want to move on to work."

☑ "I would like to go on to University if I could."

☑ "Learning is important because it gives you experience to go on to other colleges."

☑ "People need to have progressed at the end of the course - not just qualifications - 'bigger person'."

☑ "At college we learn new things and progress more. I have learnt how to make a skirt and blouse, I haven't made one before."

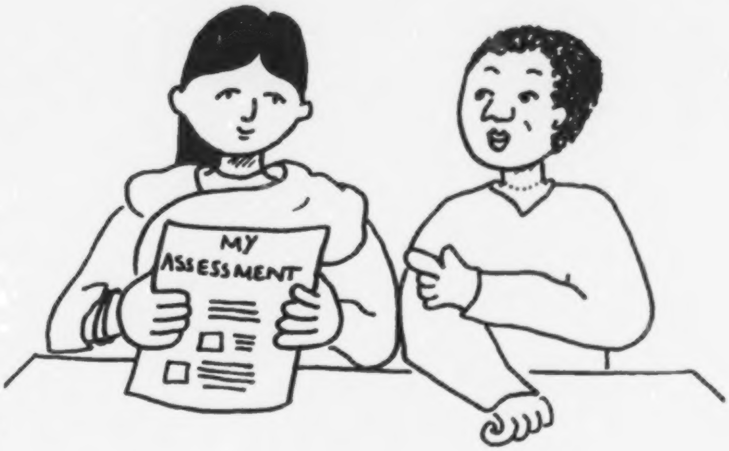
☑ "We cannot necessarily go on to a higher level course, but there are still lots of things we want to learn."

☒ "At the other college they provide the same thing every year, there is no progression. Repeat, repeat, repeat…"

☒ "People aren't allowed to go on to the next stage of courses, e.g. not going further than GCSE."

☒ "I don't want to learn it again and again and again."

Assessments and reviews – Knowing how you are getting on



Students want to know how they are getting on with their courses and learning.

Tutors and students can find this out by looking at what they have learnt on their course.

Students with learning difficulties want to be involved in doing their assessments and reviews.

They need to be clear and done in a way so students can understand what is being said about them and their learning.

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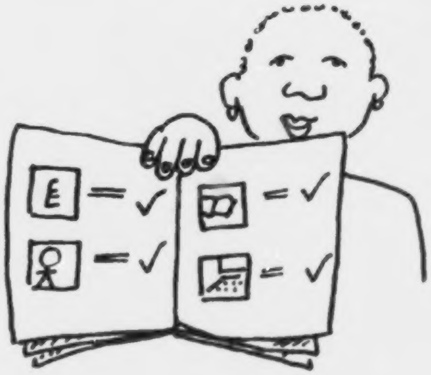
Student comments

Knowing how you are getting on – assessments and reviews

- ☑ "We go over what we have learnt. Answer questions."
- ☑ "We do assessments as a group activity."
- ☑ "We get involved in assessment. The tutor makes them in a pictorial format so that we understand what it is all about."
- ☑ "I like being able to show my family what new skills I have learnt by showing them my assessment booklet."



☑ "We take part in leading the assessments, writing down about ourselves and how we feel and our aims."

☑ "Assessment, it helps to talk about things. Including our good points and weaknesses."

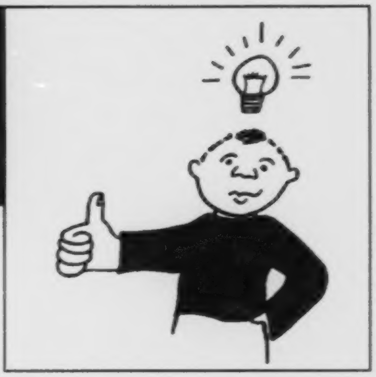
☑ "We discuss our learning goals and achievements with our tutors."

☑ "We have a Learning Support session at college where we talk and write about our courses. This is assessed and we can get certificate."

☑ "Records and how people write things down about you, I'd like to know more about that."

☒ "Nobody could remember taking part in an assessment."

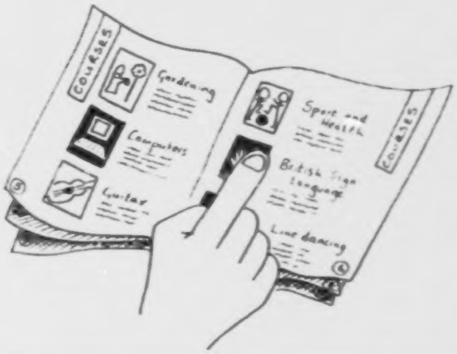
Charter ideas in action



Helping students think about progression

Manchester Adult Education Service

Students who have finished or are near the end of their courses, can meet with the Inclusive Learning Development Worker, to talk about progression. They work together in sessions and talk about what the student has done in the past, things like courses, work experience and hobbies. Then they talk about what the students want to do in the future. To help with planning, there are pictures of different courses, hobbies and work that the student can look at.


COURSES
Gardening
Computers
Guitar
Sport and Health
British Sign Language
Line dancing
COURSES

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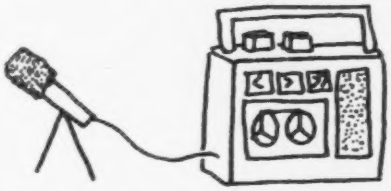
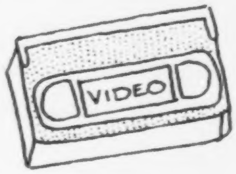
Helping students have a say in their assessments

At **Rotherham College of Arts and Technology** students are encouraged to assess themselves. There is a handbook for staff that suggests ways of making sure the students' voices are heard:

- tape a discussion that students have about how they are getting on

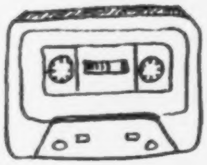


- video a discussion that students have about how they are getting on



- use photographs

- ask questions and tape the answers.

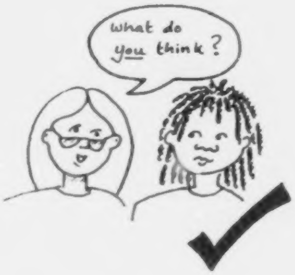


Questions to think about

Staff

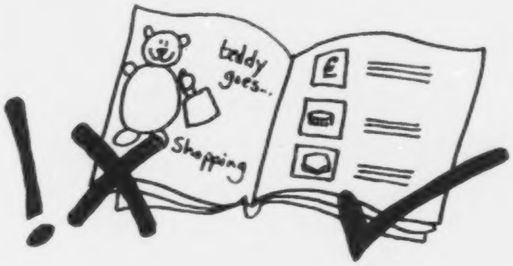
Do staff who teach students with learning difficulties feel they have the right kind of training and experience?

Students and staff


what do you think?

How can students let staff and course managers know what they think about the standard of teaching on their courses?

Do the staff use teaching materials for adults?


teddy goes...
Shopping
£

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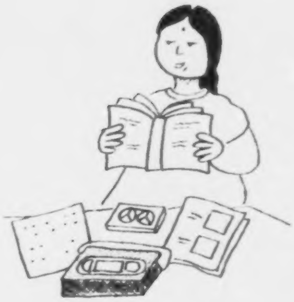
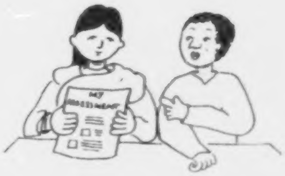
Are the teaching materials that staff use clear and easy for people to understand if they:

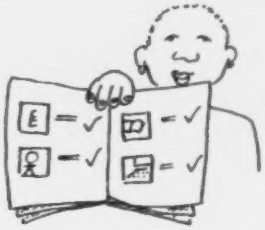
- don't read?
- have poor eye sight or are blind?
- do not speak English as their first language?



How do students know how they are getting on/progessing with their learning?



How can students be involved in their own assessments and reviews?



How can the assessments be presented in a way that is clear and easy for everyone to understand?

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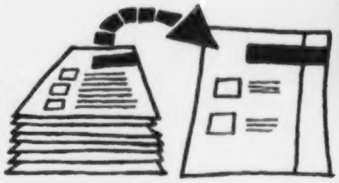
Chapter 9

Support



About this chapter

Support

This chapter looks at what students with learning difficulties have to say about support.

The right to have support

"Someone to help who you can rely on"

- Every one needs support and help.
- There are lots of different kinds of support.
- Some students with learning difficulties feel they have plenty of good support but others feel they don't have enough.

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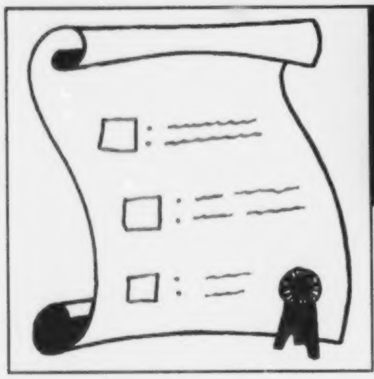
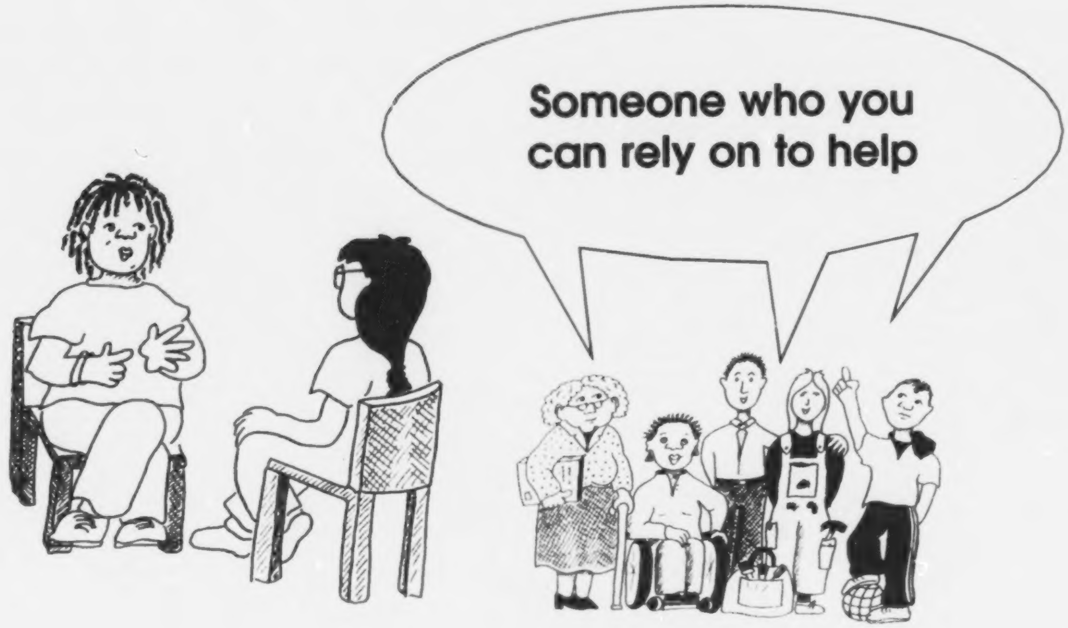
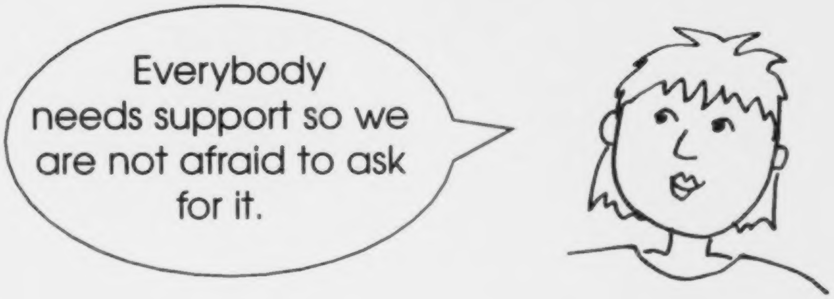


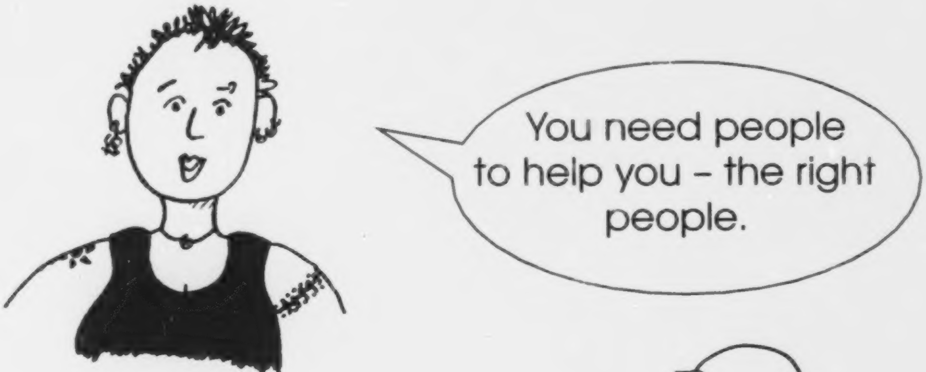
Charter Point

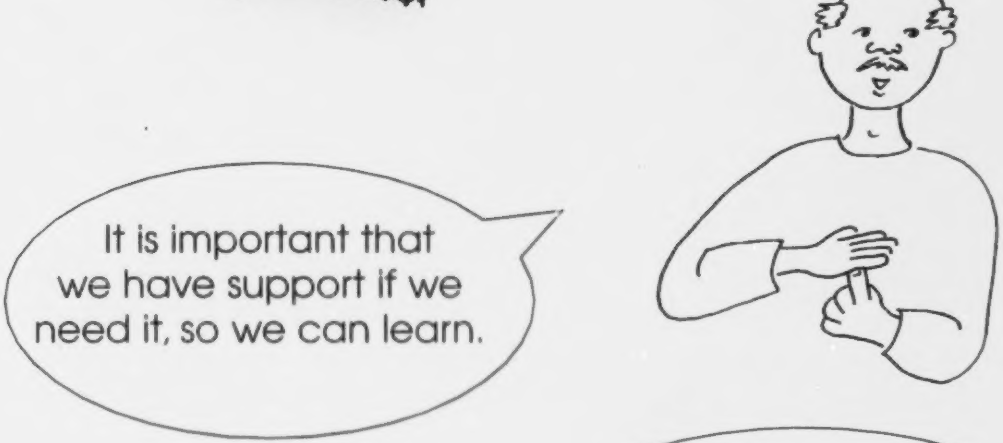
The right to have support

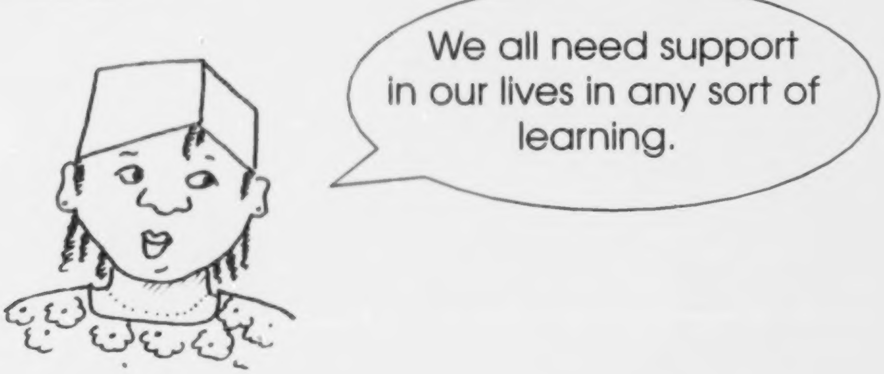

Someone who you can rely on to help

Having help with learning and being a student is something that students with learning difficulties think is very important.


Everybody needs support so we are not afraid to ask for it.


You need people to help you – the right people.


It is important that we have support if we need it, so we can learn.


We all need support in our lives in any sort of learning.

Student comments

Having help with learning and being a student is something that students with learning difficulties think is very important.
In the classroom, support for students and for tutors can help students with their learning.

Support in the classroom

- "We should have the right to have help in class, a learning assistant and a signer."
- "Someone to help the teacher, to support them in class as well as support for the student."

- "Someone to help you read things."
- "It's good to have someone to ask when you don't understand."

- "Students get help in the classroom and some students help other students."
- "It is important to have proper support when learning."

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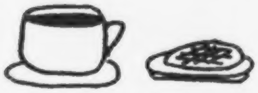
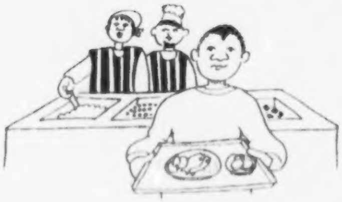
Student comments

Having help outside the classroom is also important.



Support outside the classroom

- "We like the way tutors sit with us at break time."

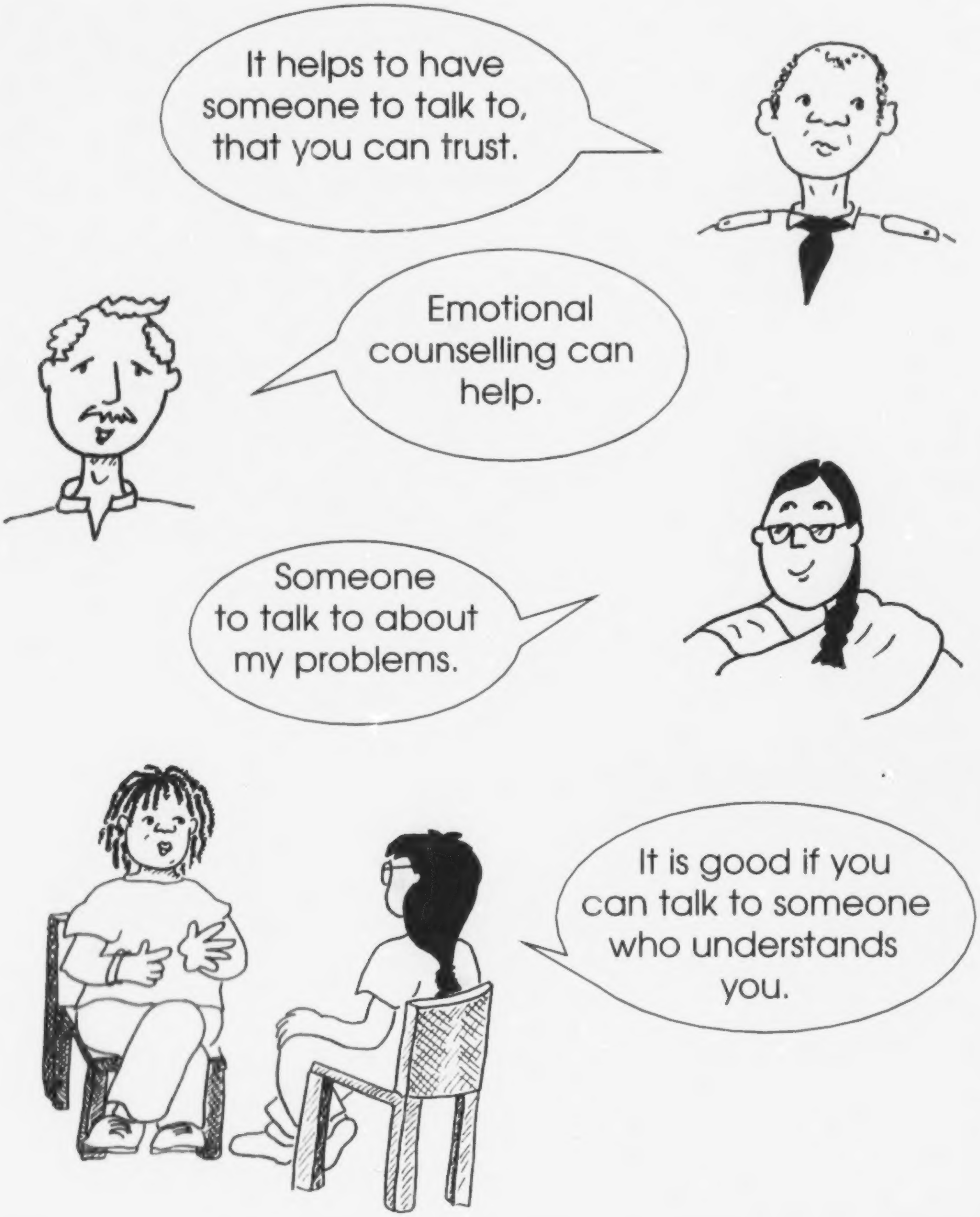


- "The staff in the canteen and restaurant are very helpful."
- "We enjoy using the library and the canteen, sometimes other students help us."

- "Staff show people to their classes and help some students carry things."

Talking to someone

Having a member of staff to talk to about problems or worries can be very helpful for some people.


It helps to have someone to talk to, that you can trust.
Emotional counselling can help.
Someone to talk to about my problems.
It is good if you can talk to someone who understands you.

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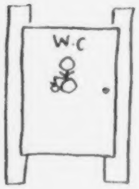
Student comments

There are some students who need a lot of help. Staff have to plan the support very carefully when they are working with students who need a lot of help.

Planning support

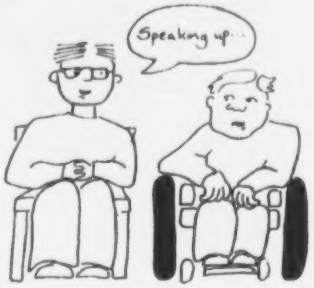


"Some students might need help going to the toilet or to be fed. These things should be taken into account when a student joins a learning centre or college. There should be facilities available to help students feel more comfortable."

Different kinds of support

There can be lots of different kinds of support for students with learning difficulties.

Different kinds of support


Speaking up...

- "Having a supporter or friend who can speak up for you."
- "Sometimes I help my friends and they help me."

- "The college arranged for my Supporter who wrote down information for me."
- "A personal assistant."

- "A support worker who helps you with the journey to class and supports you in class."
- "A personal tutor."

- A student who has no speech pointed out that he enjoys learning when he has one-to-one help.

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Support for students with learning difficulties can come from different places:

- Day centre staff.

- Support workers from houses where students with learning difficulties live.
- Family.
- Volunteers.
- Tutors and staff at the adult education centre or college.
- Friends .

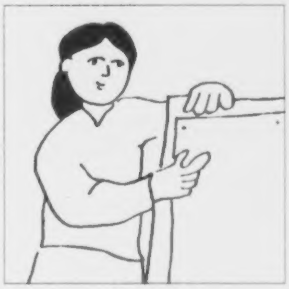
- Other students.
- Advocacy worker.

Student comments

Good support

Some students with learning difficulties think they have enough help and good support.

Good support



☑ "The staff are very friendly and make an effort to get to know us."

☑ "We get enough support. We usually have 2 tutors when we have 10 students in our class or 3 when we have more."

☑ "It is more helpful when the support worker is interested in the course too."

☑ "We have a learning support session at college where we talk and write about our courses."

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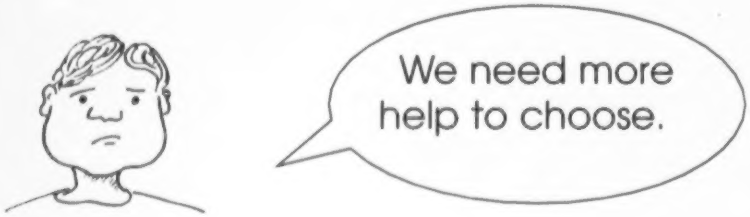
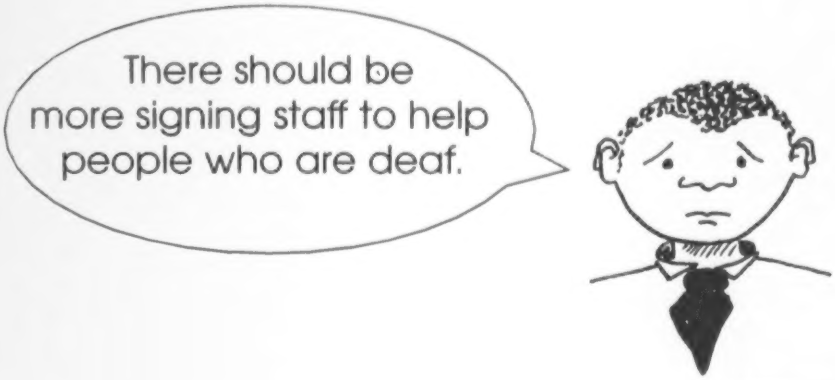
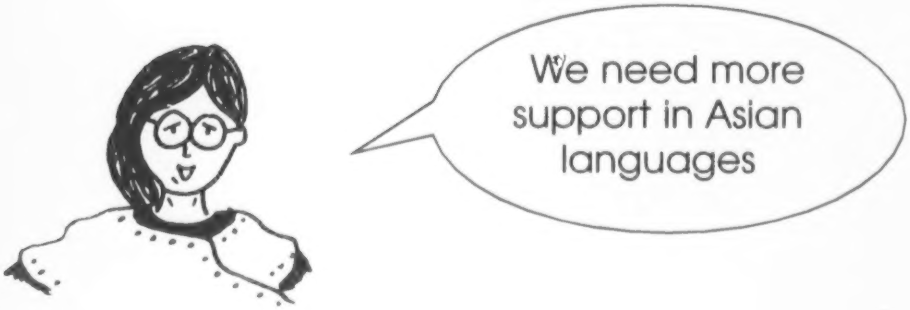
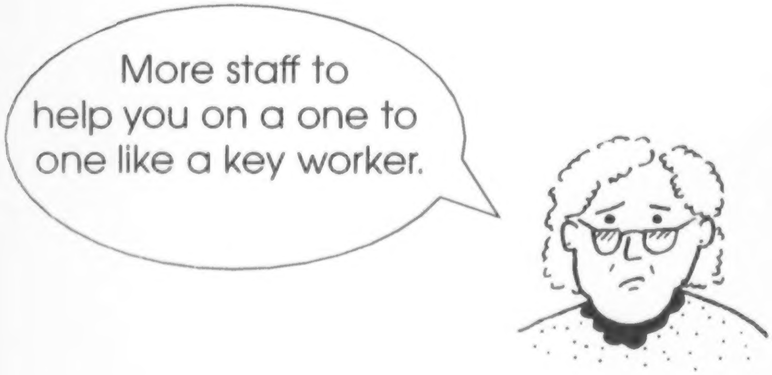
Other students think that they need more support and help.


We need more help to choose.


There should be more signing staff to help people who are deaf.

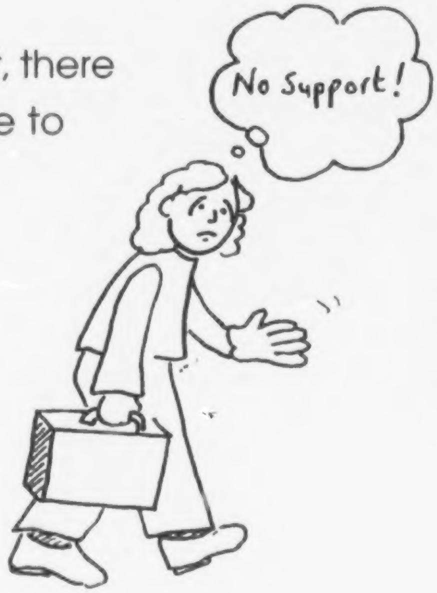

We need more support in Asian languages


More staff to help you on a one to one like a key worker.

Student comments

Not enough support

If there is not enough support, it can stop you learning things that you want.



☒ "There wasn't enough support, there is only one tutor and we have to wait to get support."

☒ "There is no support at lunch times."

☒ "Some people have left courses because of lack of support."

☒ "It is hard to learn when you haven't got the help you need."

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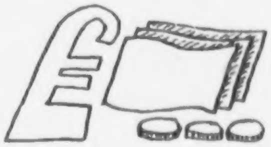
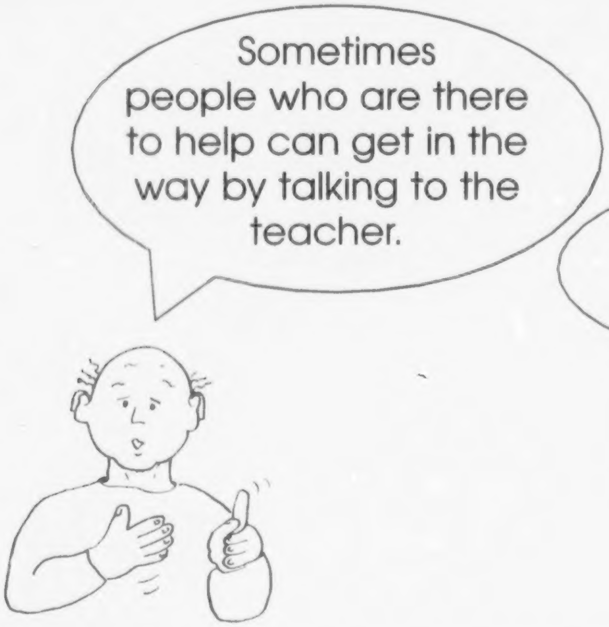
Student comments

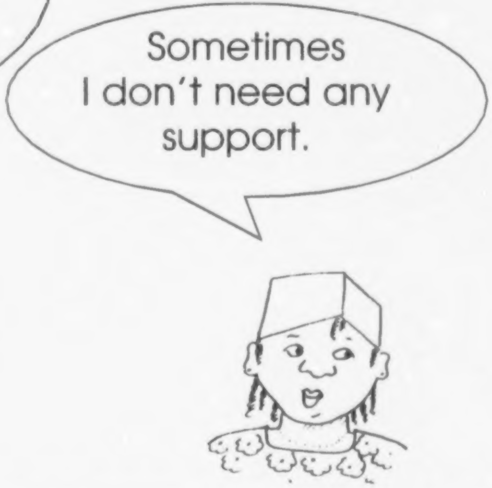
☒ "Sometimes you can't do the course you want. There should be more teachers and staff at college so we can learn what we want."

☒ "More help with issues about benefits."



Sometimes the support that students get is not very helpful.

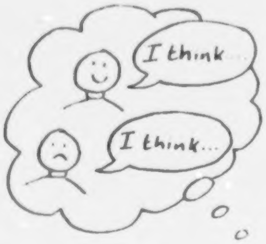

Sometimes people who are there to help can get in the way by talking to the teacher.


Sometimes I don't need any support.

Questions to think about

Students and staff

Do students have a say about:


I think...
I think...

- How much support they need?
- If they think the support they get is good and helps them?
- Changing the amount of support that they need, if they need more or less?

Is there clear and easy to understand information about support for students with learning difficulties?

Staff

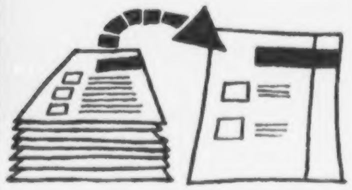
What support is there for students who need help with most things? For example, going to the toilet or eating?

If students have support from different places, e.g. a day centre and college, how is it planned?

Chapter 10

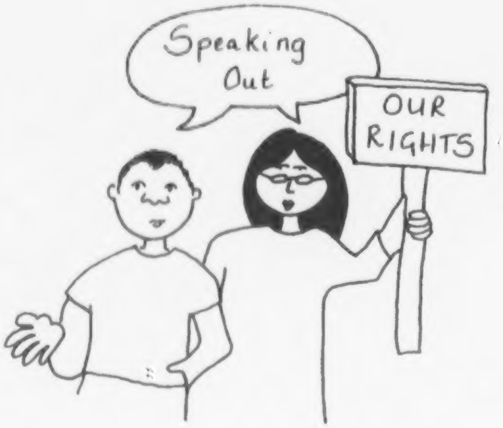
The students' voice

About this chapter



The students' voice

This chapter looks at how students with learning difficulties can have a say.



The right to speak up

"We are adults with a voice; we want to be heard"

- People with learning difficulties want to speak up for themselves and have a say about their learning.

- Some people need help to speak up. Self-advocates or advocates could help them.

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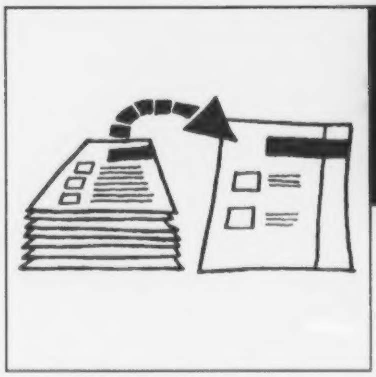
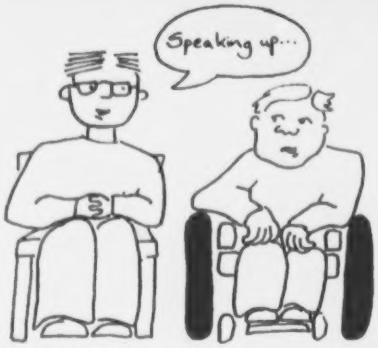


About this chapter


Speaking up...

- Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties, who don't speak, can let us know what they think and feel in other ways.

- It is important that the students' voice can be heard. It could be on a committee, a student self-advocacy group or through a student representative.

- There should to be clear and easy-to-understand ways for students with learning difficulties to make complaints.

Complaints

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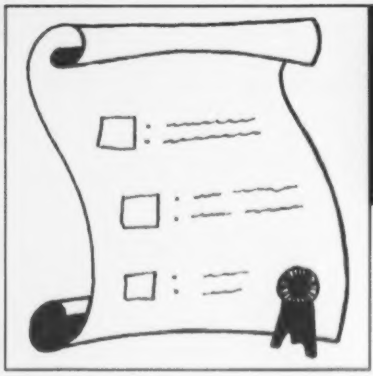
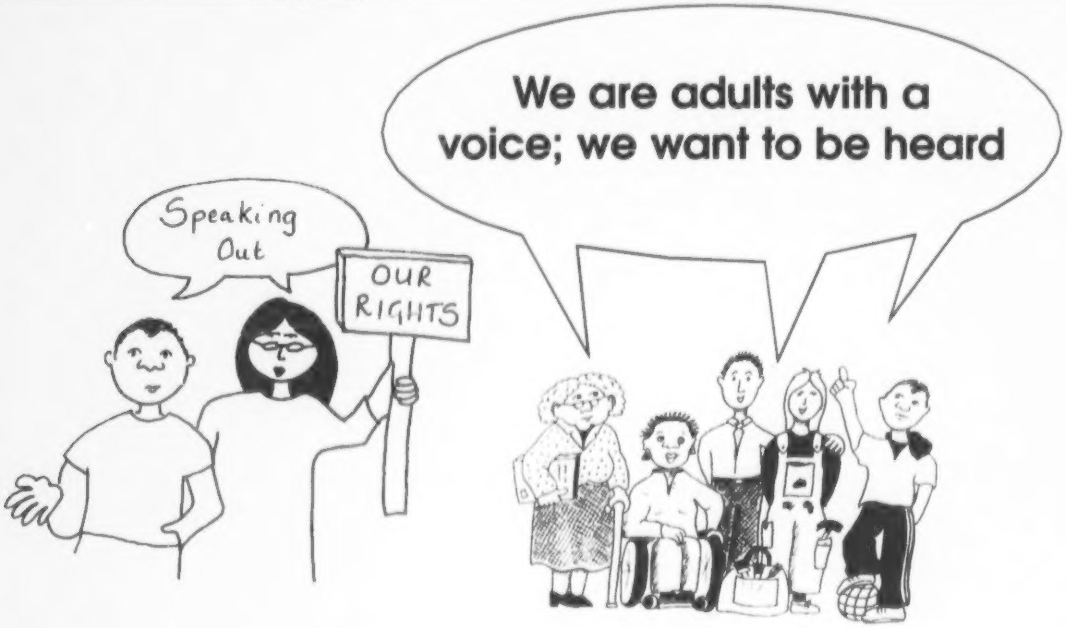


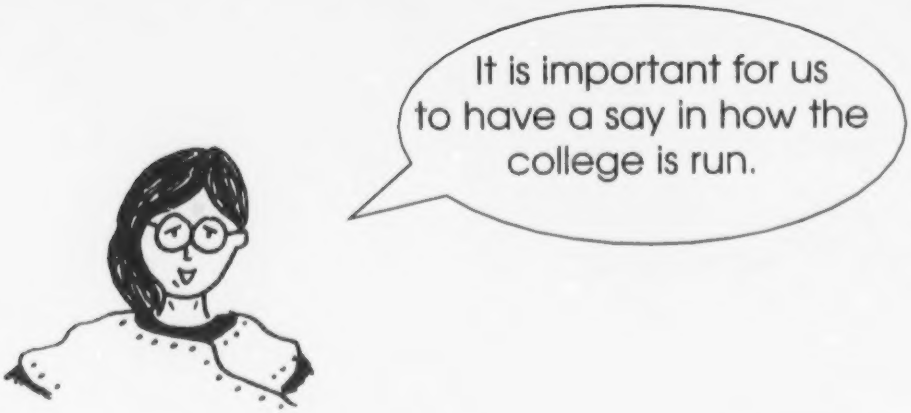
Charter Point

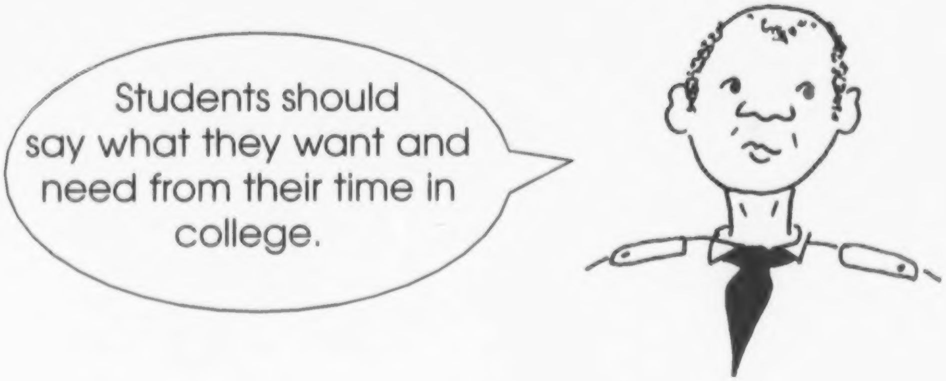
The right to speak up

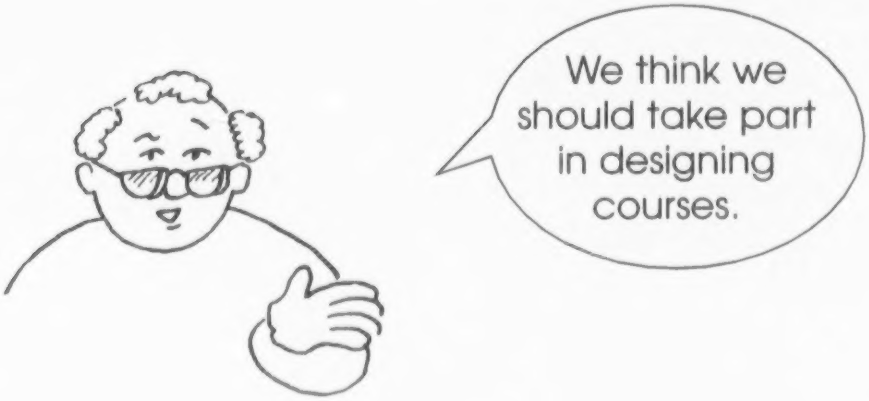

We are adults with a voice; we want to be heard
Speaking Out
OUR RIGHTS

How can students with learning difficulties have a say about what they learn, the place where they learn and the support they get?

We should have a real say in what goes on in the college and we should have debates about important issues

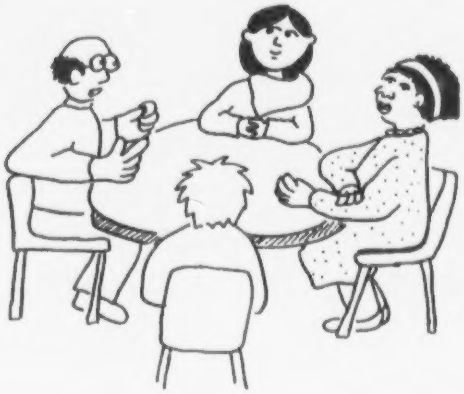

It is important for us to have a say in how the college is run.


Students should say what they want and need from their time in college.


We think we should take part in designing courses.

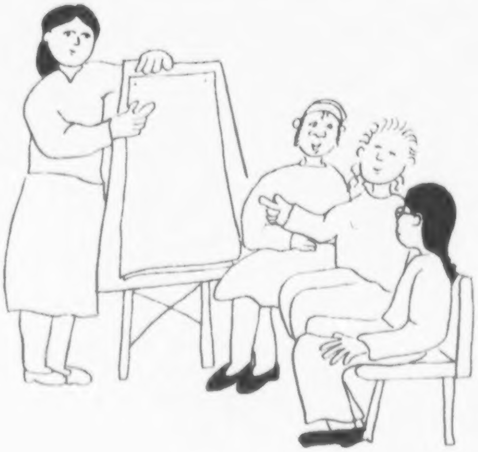
Speaking up

self-advocacy is about people with learning difficulties speaking up for themselves and other people listening to what they have to say.



People from day centres, adult education centres and colleges talked about their self-advocacy classes when they sent in information for the **Charter for Learning**.

In self-advocacy classes, people with learning difficulties learn about speaking up for themselves. They can practise and get more confident about putting their point across. The classes are usually run by a tutor. In some colleges and adult education centres, self-advocacy classes are run by a person with learning difficulties and a helper working together.



Student comments

Speaking Out
OUR RIGHTS

Self-advocacy classes

- "They help us to learn about self-advocacy and encourage us to use self-advocacy."

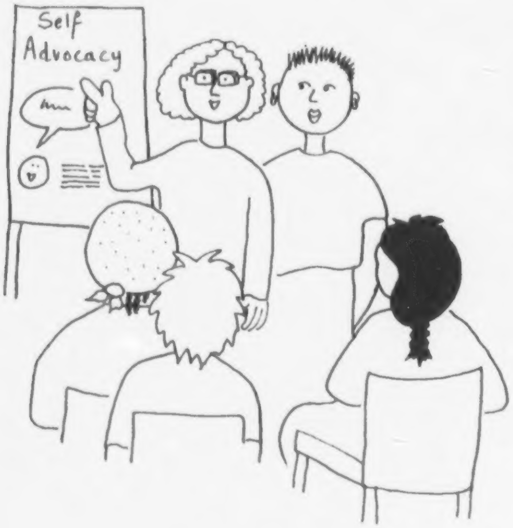
- "In self-advocacy we are given the opportunity to speak up for ourselves."

- "I enjoy coming because the staff are geared up for self-advocacy They help you do things on your own."

- "We learn to speak up for ourselves."

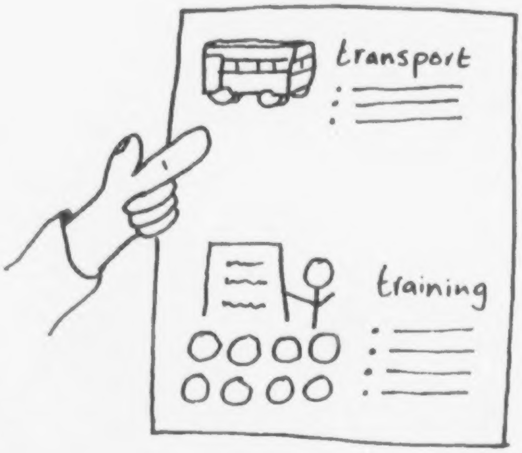
Some self-advocacy groups, including **Lancashire Advocacy** and **North Herts People First**, wrote to NIACE with their ideas about the **Charter for Learning**.

Self-advocacy groups and organisations can be a bit different from self-advocacy classes.



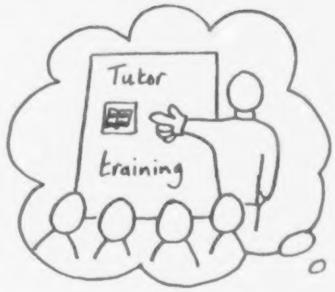
People with learning difficulties usually run the groups themselves with some help from a worker. Self-advocacy groups can meet in colleges or adult education centres. Often they meet in their own room in a community centre or at their own offices for the self-advocacy organisation.

People with learning difficulties in self-advocacy groups work together to have a say on lots of different things like transport and training for staff who work with people with learning difficulties. They can also help other people with learning difficulties have a say in their lives.

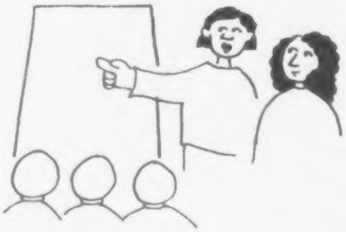


Comments from self-advocacy groups

- "An advocacy group should be involved with and set up in colleges."



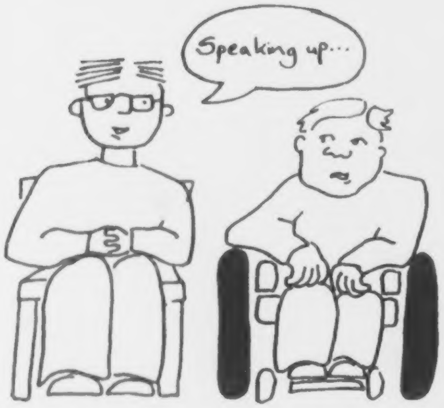
- "Tutors should be trained by a self-advocacy organisation so they are properly aware."



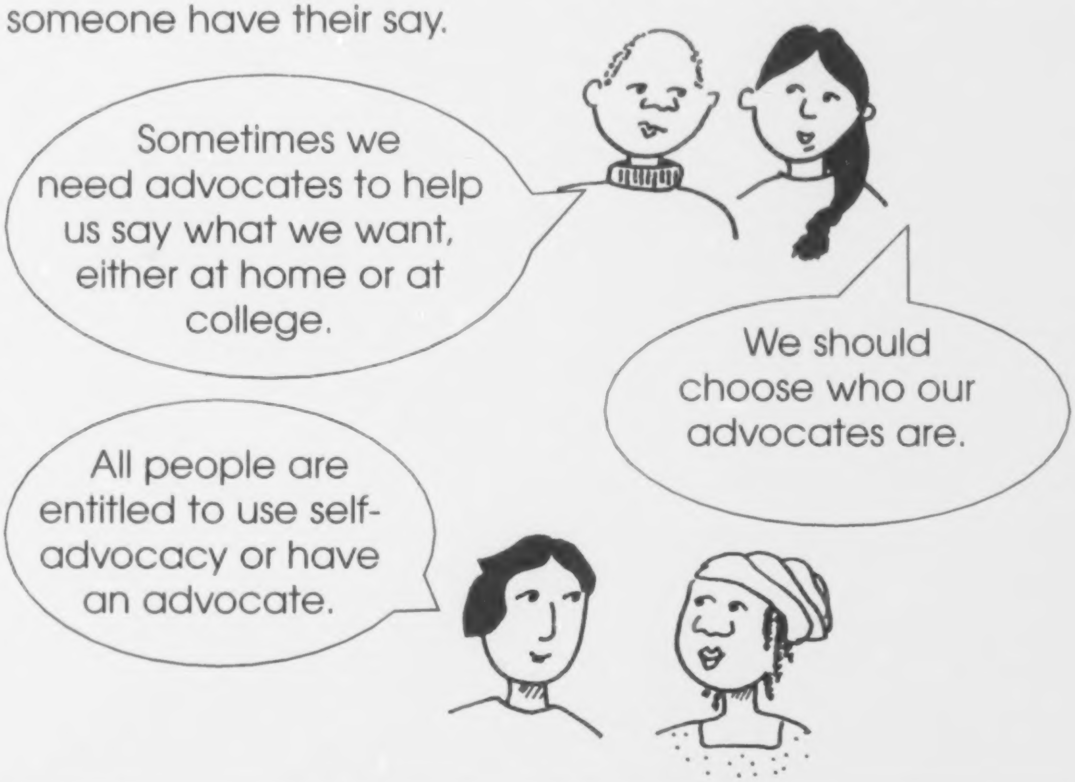
- "People with learning difficulties training other people so they understand about learning difficulties."

- "If an advocacy organisation makes a recommendation about training for tutors and staff, they must be put in place."

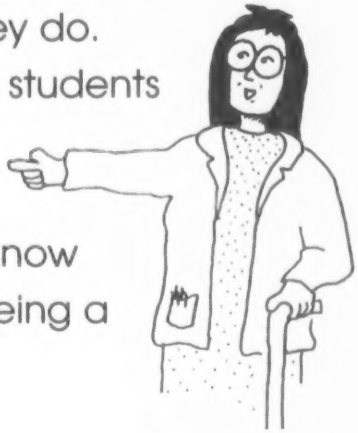
Advocates


Speaking up...

An advocate is a person whose job it is to work with a person with a learning difficulty and help them say what they want to say. Some people with learning difficulties need help with saying what they want and think about things. An advocate can speak for the person with a learning difficulty, but not before checking with them what their point is. Local citizen advocacy organisations may be able to find an advocate to help someone have their say.


Sometimes we need advocates to help us say what we want, either at home or at college.
We should choose who our advocates are.
All people are entitled to use self-advocacy or have an advocate.

Having a say without words



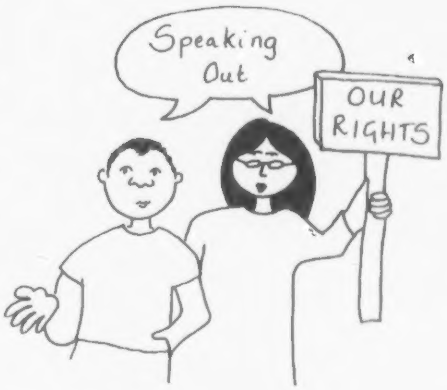
There are students with learning difficulties who need a lot of help with most things they do. These students are often described as students with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Some of these students don't speak, but it is still important to know what they think about learning and being a student.

A group of tutors and carers at The Adult College Lancaster work in a communications workshop with some students with profound and multiple learning difficulties. The staff and carers say the students enjoy the workshop but how do they know? They know because the students:

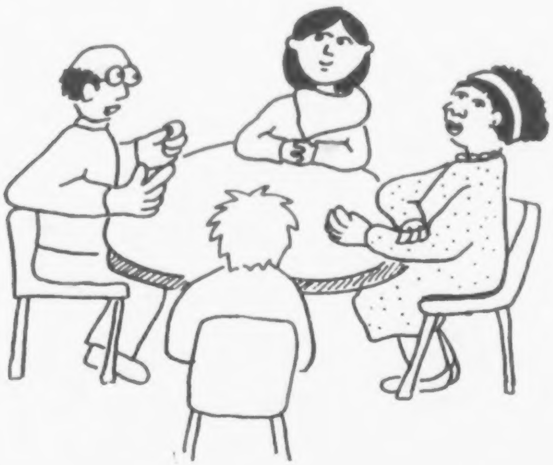
- smile
- make excited noises
- want to take part in the different activities
- are relaxed.

Students with learning difficulties having a voice

Some people with learning difficulties who sent in their ideas for the **Charter for Learning** said that there were ways they could have their say as students.



There are many different groups where students with learning difficulties can have a say. Some of the groups people told us about were in day centres, some in colleges or adult education centres.



On the committee students are having a say.

I think....
I think...

We have two student representatives who can say what the group wants and feels.

The Student Committee is good because students are actually being heard, instead of tutors saying what is right for the college.

what do you think?

Sessions are arranged by what we say we want to do.

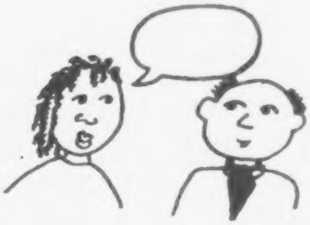
Student comments

Other students felt that they did not have the chance to have a say.

We want to have a say

- "At college no-one asks us to be involved."

- "We would like to be told about things which affect us – not just given letters which we can't read."



- "There should be a student representative or advocacy scheme to help shy people or people who are not getting on well."

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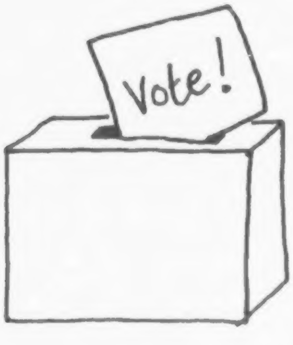
- "No-one in our group knew there was a Student Union that they could contact if they needed to."

- "We have no power – no student voice."

- "There is no Student Committee, there should be one."

- "We want a Student Committee for learning and more input into what we learn and how we learn."



- "We should have the right to have people with learning difficulties voted on to the Student Union Committee."

Complaints

Complaints

People felt that it was important that if something was not right, they should know how to complain and who to talk to.

Students at **Lowestoft College** complained about some students using the lift and making it difficult for students with disabilities to use it. A student representative for students with learning difficulties took the complaint to the college's student forum. The college took notice and posters were put on the walls next to the lift asking people to use the stairs where possible.

Student comments

Making complaints

- "Students should be able to make complaints if they are not satisfied."

- "We have the right to know who to complain to."

Complaints

- "There should be a better complaints service."

- "The complaints procedure is written. It needs to be in pictures or symbols and easy to understand."

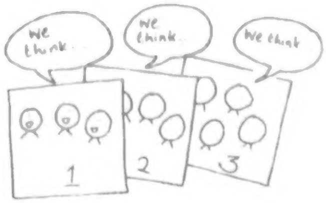
Charter ideas in action

Hackney College

At Hackney College an ex-student with learning difficulties helps run a self-advocacy group. She comes in once a week to help run the group and is paid for her work.

Calderdale Advocacy

In May 1998 there were plans to make big changes to education for adults with learning difficulties in Calderdale.



Calderdale Community Education set up three self-advocacy discussion groups for adults with learning difficulties.

People had a chance to say in the groups what they thought about adult education in Calderdale and the changes that might happen. The groups were run by staff from an organisation called **Calderdale Advocacy**. They listened to what the people with learning difficulties had to say and then wrote a report about people's views.

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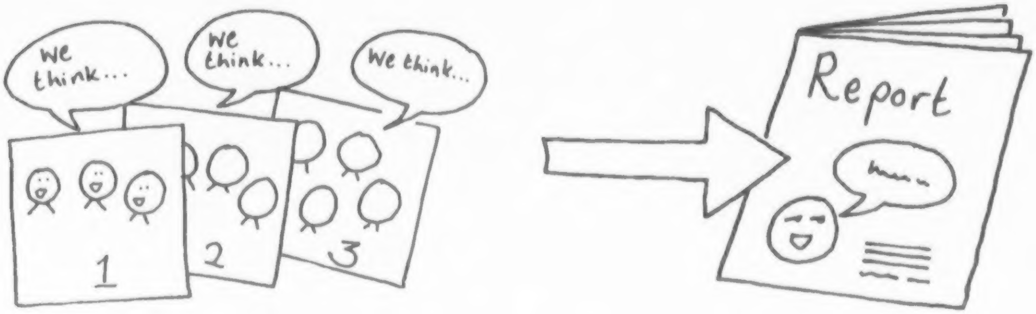
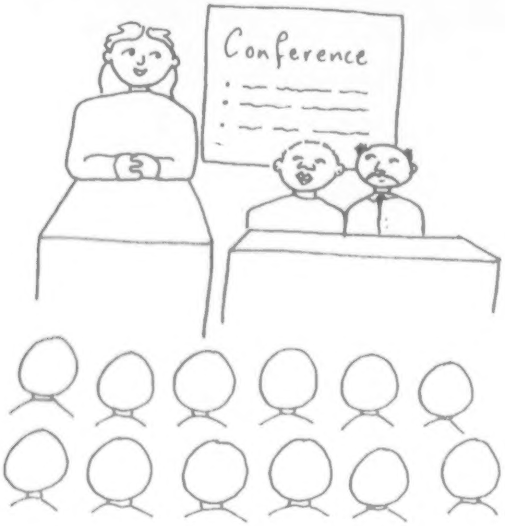


Staff who plan adult education for Calderdale read the report. In the report one of the changes that students said they wanted was more nature courses – a bird watching course was set up. Students also asked for courses during the summer – some summer workshops were organised.

Lowestoft College Self-Advocacy Conference



Students and staff from the **Towards Independence course** at **Lowestoft College** plan their own self-advocacy conference for the summer term.

The students decide what they will talk about and some students lead the discussion groups or workshops at the conference.

The conference takes place in a large room in the most modern building of the college which is fully accessible and especially designed for conferences, seminars and meetings. A self-advocacy organisation, **Suffolk Voice**, helped the college set up the first conference.

Swindon College Forum

Students with learning difficulties at **Swindon College** have a Students' Forum which meets once a month.

Self
Advocacy

The Forum is supported by a self-advocate from Swindon People First who comes into the college with a supporter to help run the Forum.

A self-advocate is a person with learning difficulties who knows a lot about self-advocacy. The person who helps run the Forum is paid by **Swindon People First** to do this.

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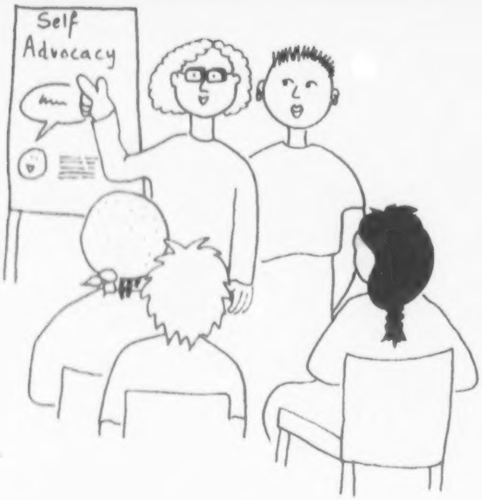
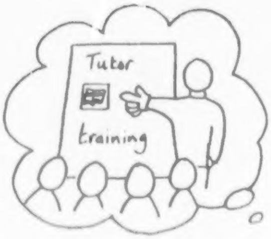
Questions to think about



Students and staff



Do students with learning difficulties have the opportunity to learn self-advocacy skills?

Do staff have training, or opportunities for training, in self-advocacy?

Is there a committee or group where the voices of students with learning difficulties can be heard?

Staff

How do students with profound and multiple learning difficulties let you know how they feel about learning and being a student?

Is there a local self-advocacy organisation that could work with students with learning difficulties to help them have a say about where and what they learn?

Speaking up

Are there trained advocates available for students who might need them?

Is there a complaints procedure that is clear and easy to understand for students with learning difficulties who:

- don't read?
- have poor eye sight or are blind?
- do not speak English as their first language?

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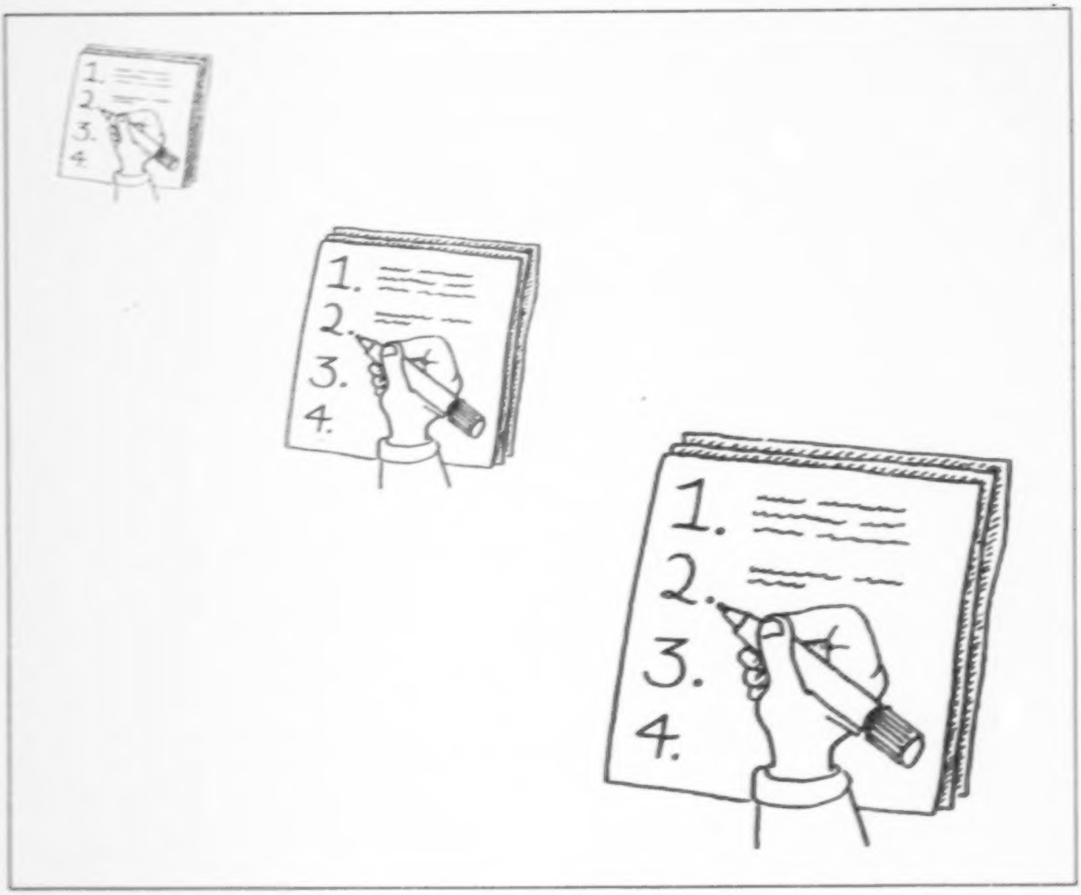
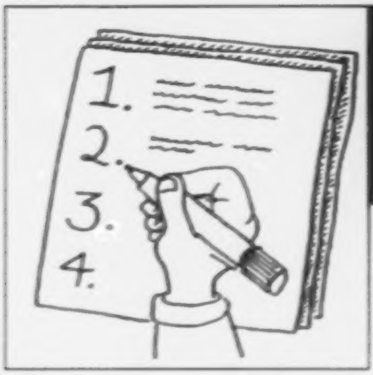
Action Plan



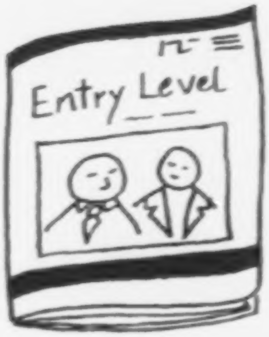


Action Plan

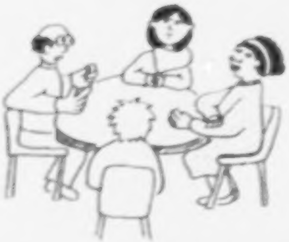
Charter Action Plan ☑

Ten things to go away and do after reading "Our Right to Learn"

This list is for students with learning difficulties and staff. It gives ideas of some things you could do together. Try one at a time and see how you get on!



☑ Set up a group of students with learning difficulties and staff to work together and make information about courses clear and easy to understand.



☑ Hold a student meeting to talk about the charter.

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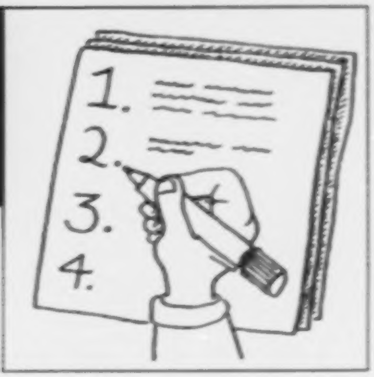
Action Plan



☑ Produce a staff handbook by students with learning difficulties.

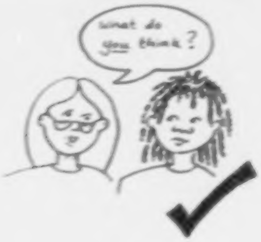
☑ Make a student guide by and for students with learning difficulties.

Self Advocacy

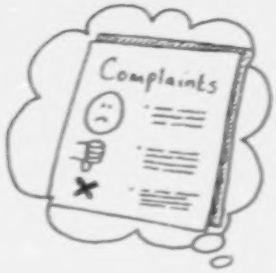
☑ Invite a local self-advocacy or People First organisation to come in and talk about rights and self-advocacy.

☑ Look at access to and around the building(s) where you learn. Make a list of how it could be made better and have a meeting with the manager who is responsible.

Action Plan

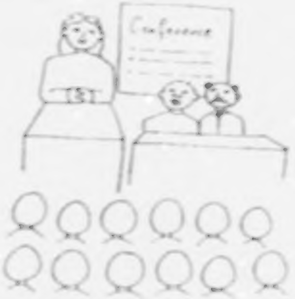

what do you think?

☑ Find out what students think about the support they have.


Complaints

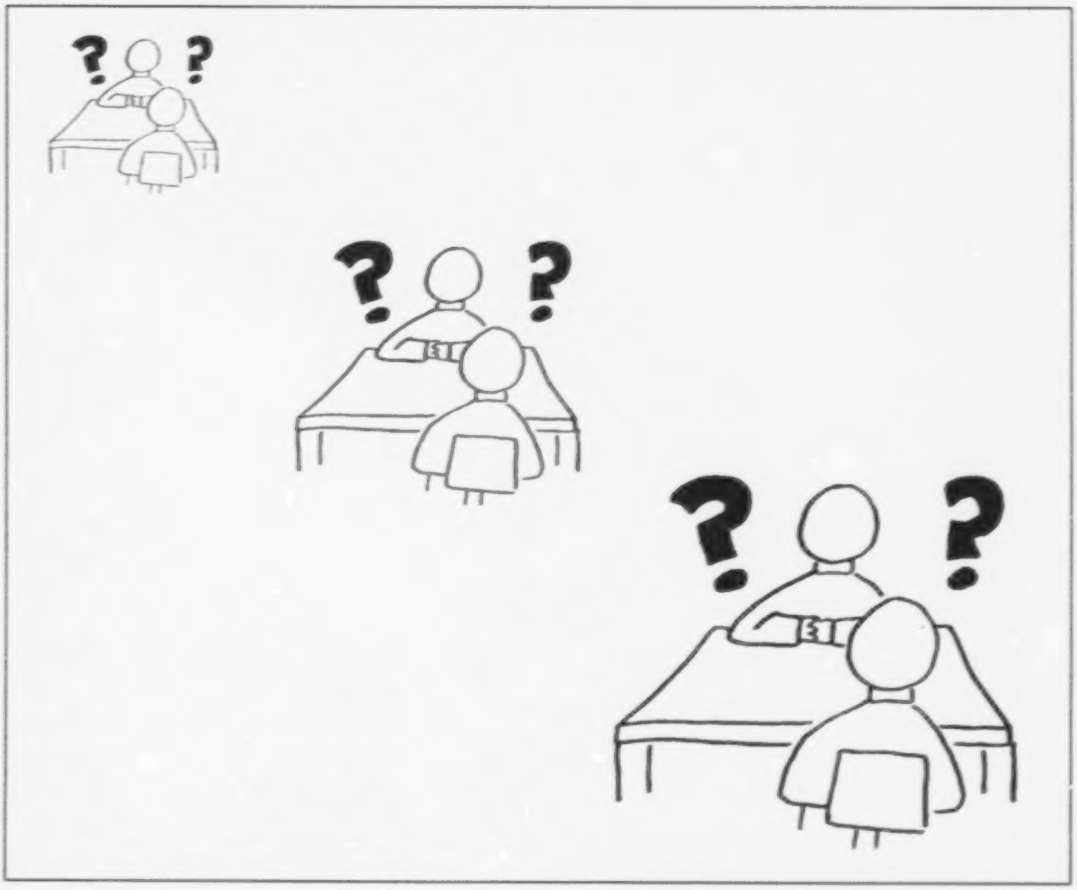
☑ Check that the complaints procedure is clear, easy to understand and use.

☑ Find out how students who are bullied can get help.


Conference

☑ Have a conference run by and for students with learning difficulties about what is important about learning for them.

Questions for Managers



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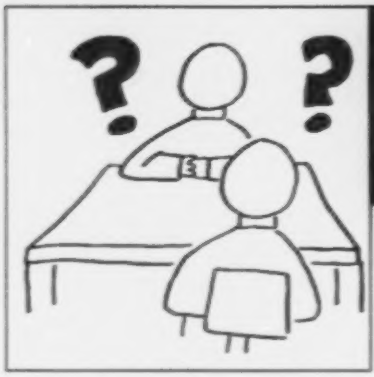

Questions for Managers

The following questions are based on the themes from Our Right to Learn.

- Could you organise a briefing for senior colleagues about issues for students with learning difficulties identified in the **Charter for Learning** and **Our Right to Learn**?
- What forums are available for students with learning difficulties to have their voices heard by management?
- How can issues raised in **Our Right to Learn** inform the development of inclusive learning in your organisation?
- How can you can improve support and access for people with learning difficulties and how can planning with colleagues from other agencies help?

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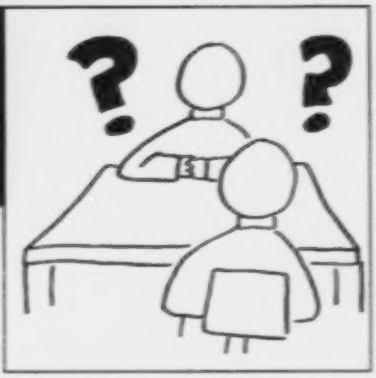
Questions for Managers



- What sort of barriers exist for students with learning difficulties joining in with social events within your organisation and how could planning help overcome these barriers?

- How can people with learning difficulties be included in the whole life of your organisation from being on reception to being on students' committees?

- How welcoming is your building to learners with learning difficulties?

- How accessible are the organisations' facilities to meet the needs of all learners but in particular students with learning difficulties?

- Do you have or could you develop an anti-bullying strategy for students with learning difficulties, particularly students who have difficulties with communication?

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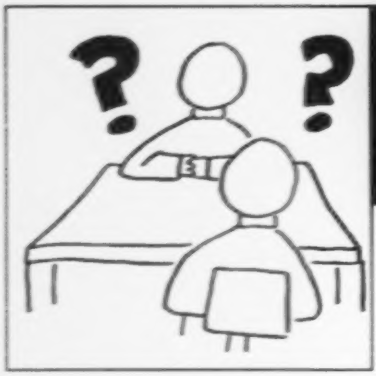

Questions for Managers

- Does your communications strategy address the need to have information in different formats that are accessible to all students: for example on video, in clear language and large print, on audio tape?

- Do students with learning difficulties have access to the whole curriculum on offer?

- How can students with learning difficulties be more involved in their assessments, reviews and progression plans?

- How can your organisation address the issue of costs to students if they are excluding people with learning difficulties as learners?

- Does the staff development programme include training by students with learning difficulties about what they want from learning?

- Is the quality of support available to students with learning difficulties regularly monitored?

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Useful books and resources

Useful books and resources

- **Training for Change**, A pack to support adults with learning difficulties to develop the skills to be trainers. (NIACE/CHANGE 1998)

- **National Quality Standards**, Working with Service Users who have learning disabilities. Supporting service users to set their own Quality Standards. (CHANGE 1998)

- **CHANGE Picture Bank**, A pack and CD Rom of pictures that can be used to make information clear and easy to understand. (CHANGE 1999)

- **The MAP Pack - More Access Please**, Accessible information pack about people with learning difficulties and sensory disabilities. (CHANGE 1997)

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Useful books and resources

- **What's Good Support?** Book and video – people with learning difficulties talk about what makes good support.
  (Gateway/Mencap 1999)

NIACE publishes a number of books for staff in relation to continuing education and students with learning difficulties.
Further information is available from
NIACE:
Tel: 0116 204 4200/1
Website: www.niace.org.uk

Useful books and resources

Useful Addresses

CHANGE
First Floor
69-85 Old Street
LONDON EC1V 9HY
Tel: 020 7490 2668

Mencap National Centre
123 Golden Lane
LONDON EC1Y 0RT
Tel: 020 7454 0454
Website: www.mencap.org.uk

NIACE: The National Organisation for Adult Learning
21 De Montfort Street
LEICESTER
LE1 7GE
Tel: 0116 204 4200
Website: www.niace.org.uk

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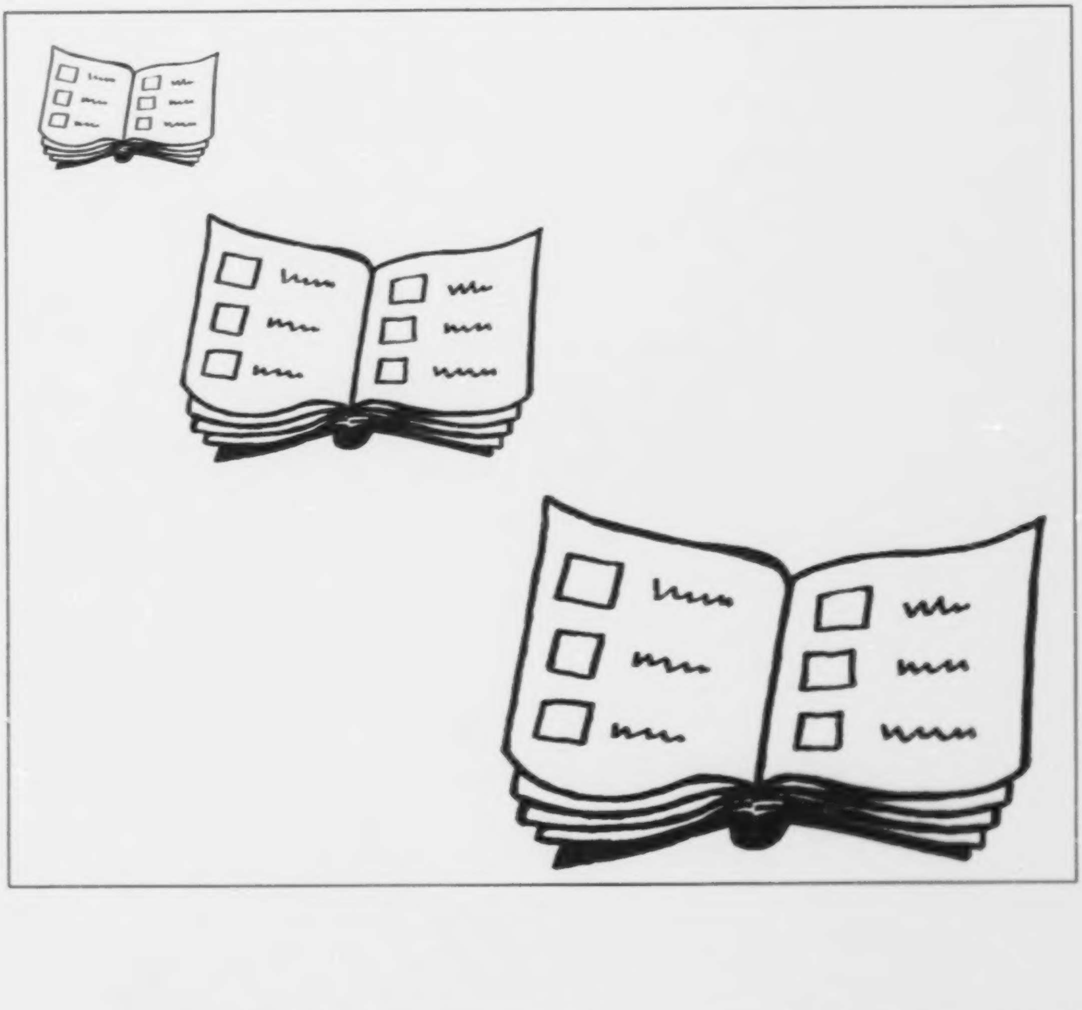
Useful books and resources

People First
Instrument House
207-15 Kings Cross Road
LONDON WC1X 9DB
Tel: 020 7713 6400

Values Into Action (VIA)
Oxford House
Derbyshire Street
LONDON E2 6HG
Tel: 020 7729 5436

SKILL: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
Chapter House
18-20 Crucifix Lane
LONDON SE1 3JW
Tel: 020 7450 0620
Information Service: 0800 328 5050
Website: www.skill.org.uk

Word Bank



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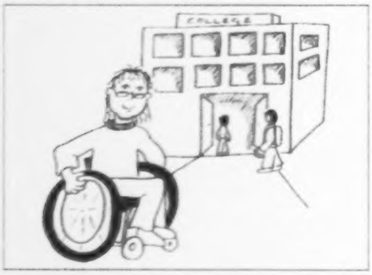
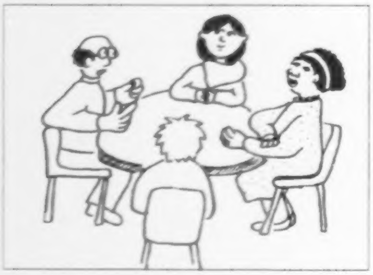
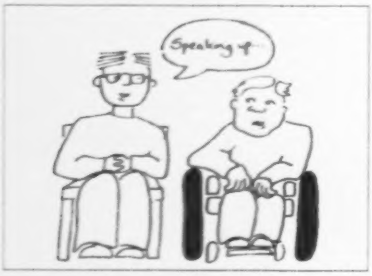


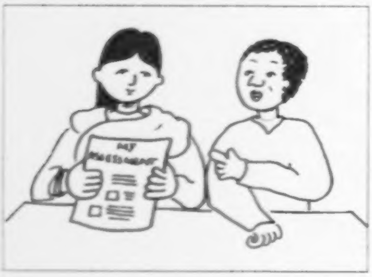
Access – Being able to get to or into a building.



Advisory group – A group who meet and talk about or help with a piece of work, like the charter and the charter book.



Advocate – A person who helps another person to get their point of view across.



Assessment – Looking at what a student knows and what they need and want to learn next.

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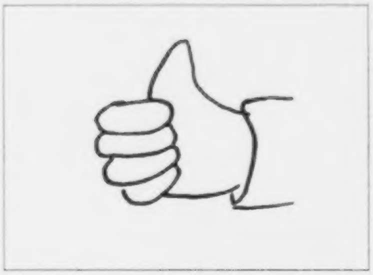
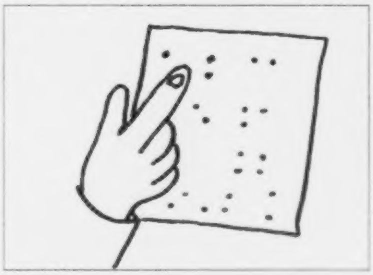
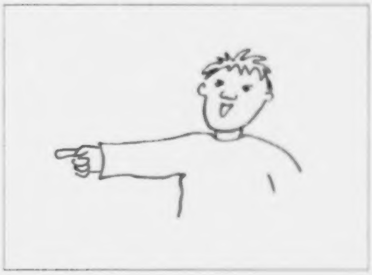
Word Bank



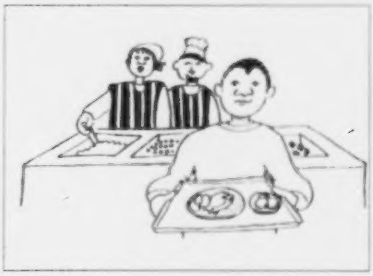
Basic – Something that is plain or easy.



Braille – A kind of print that people who are blind can read by feeling it with their fingers.



Bullying – When a person hurts or makes fun of another person.



Catering – Working in a canteen or restaurant cooking and serving food.

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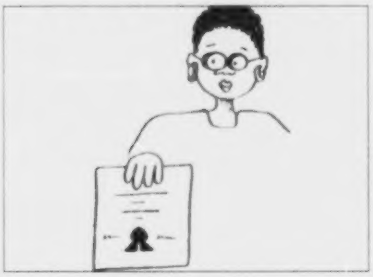
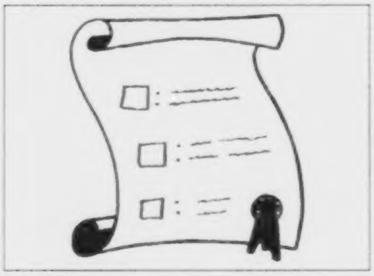
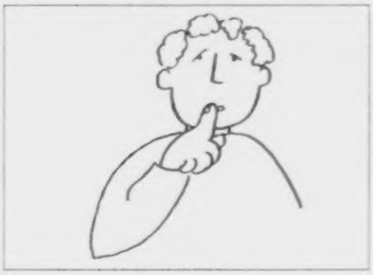
Word Bank



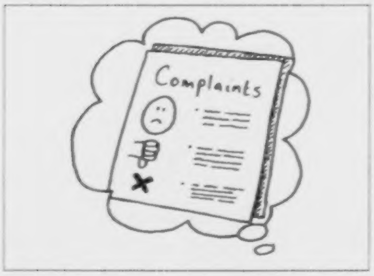
Certificate – A piece of paper that says which course you have done or which exam you have passed.



Charter – A very important list of rights.



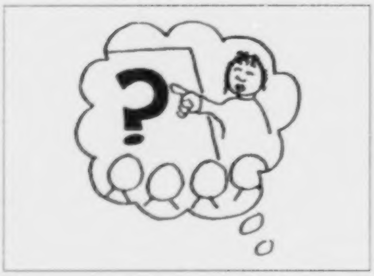
Confidentiality – To keep important things secret.



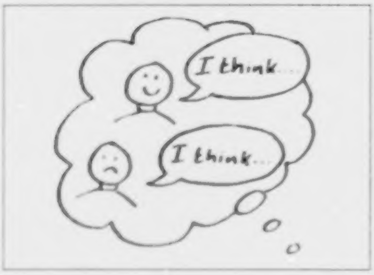
Complaints procedure – A plan to help people say if they are not happy about something and want it changed.

Word Bank

Communicating – Different ways people have of saying what they think and feel.



Course review – Looking back at what has been done on a course.


I think...
I think...

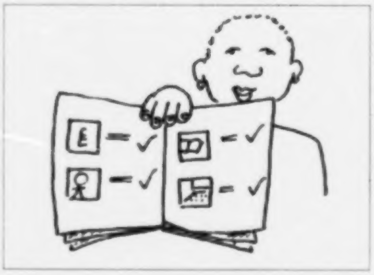
Course evaluation – Looking at a course you have done and thinking about what was good and what wasn't so good.

Discrete courses – Courses that are for students with learning difficulties.

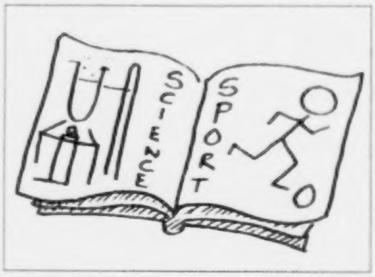
Word Bank

Independent – Doing things for yourself with as little help as possible.

Individually – One person on their own.



Learning goals – The things that a student wants to have learnt by the end of a course.



Mainstream courses – Courses that are for all different kinds of students, sometimes including students with learning difficulties.

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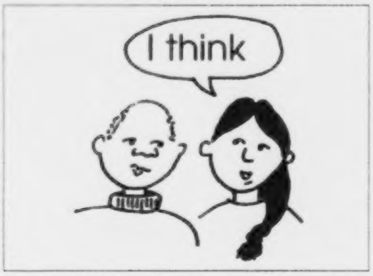
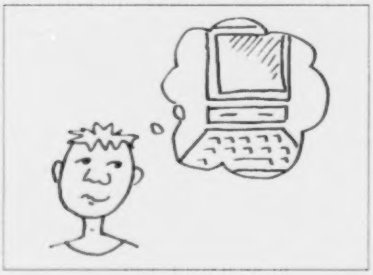
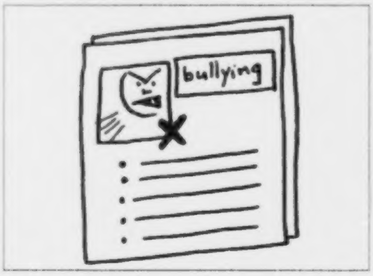


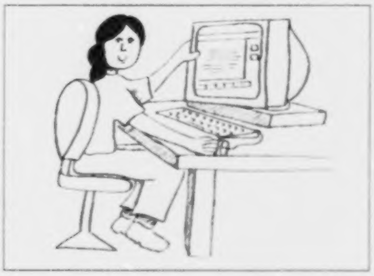
Opinion – What someone thinks about something.



Opportunities – A chance to do something.



Policy – Plans that colleges or adult education services have on how they will deal with different things like equal opportunities or health and safety.



Progression – Moving on to learn new things.

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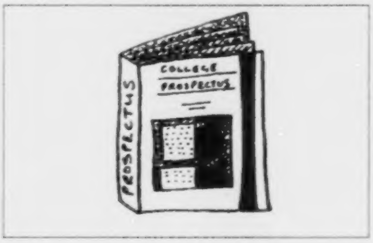
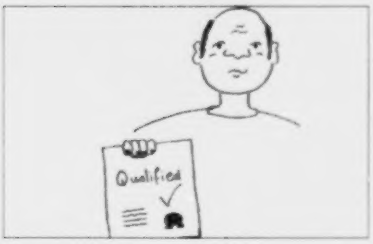
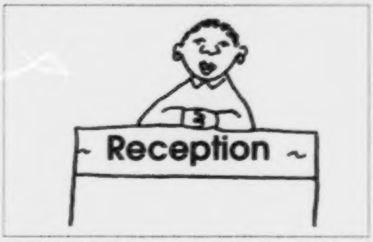


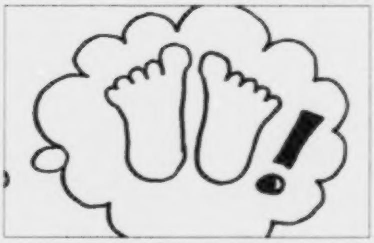
Prospectus – A booklet about all the courses and things you can do at college or adult education centre.



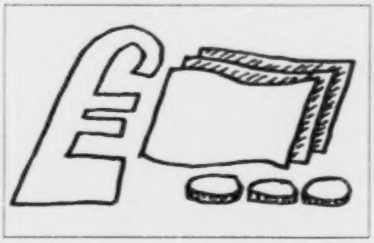
Qualification – A certificate that says that a person has learnt a skill like painting and decorating which might help them get a job.



Reception – The place near the entrance where you can ask for help when going into a building for the first time.



Reflexology – Massaging feet to make the whole body feel better.



Registration fees – Money that students have to pay for their courses.

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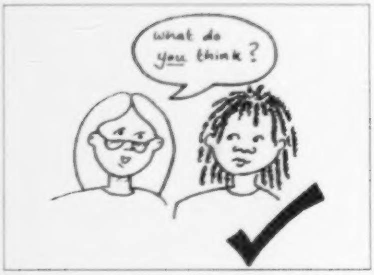
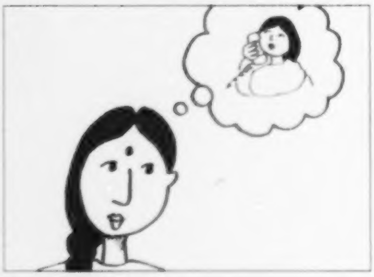
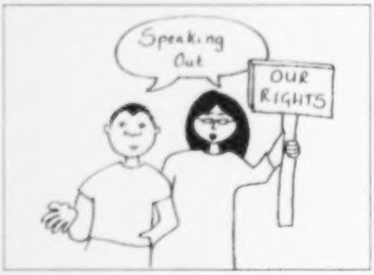

What do you think?

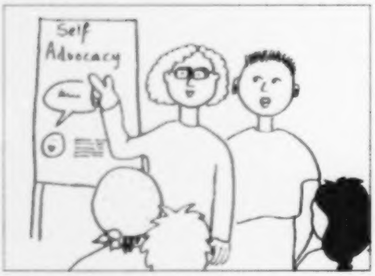
Respect – Treating a person well and in an adult way.



Responsibilities – Things that people need to make sure they do.

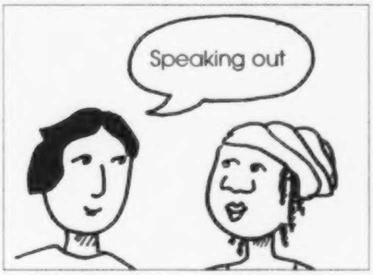

Speaking Out
OUR RIGHTS

Rights – Things people want so they are treated equally, the same as everyone else.

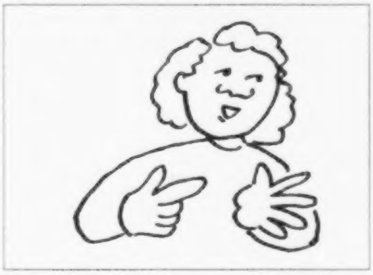

Self Advocacy

Self-advocacy organisation – An organisation that is run by people with learning difficulties who are self advocates.

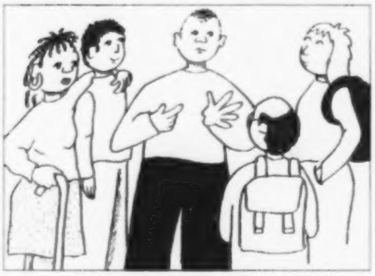
Word Bank



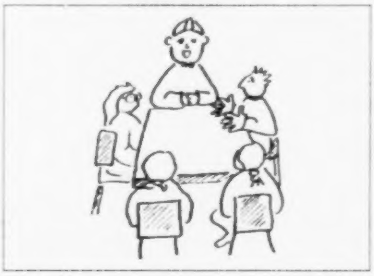
Self-advocate – A person who speaks up for themselves and their rights and can help other people to learn to speak up for themselves.



Sign Language – A language that deaf people use to talk to each other.



Social life – What a person does when they are with friends, going out and not studying or at work.



Student committee – A group of student representatives who meet to talk about what students want.

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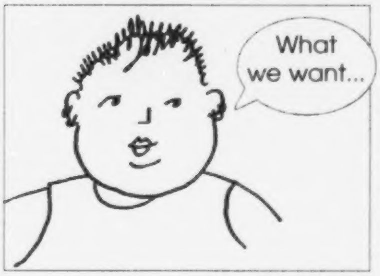
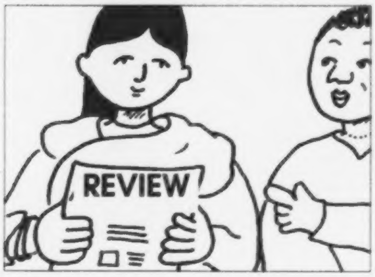
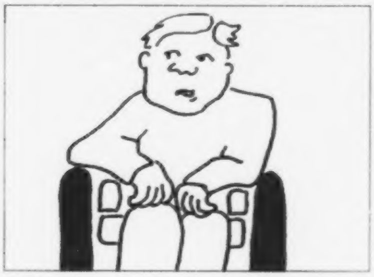

What we want...

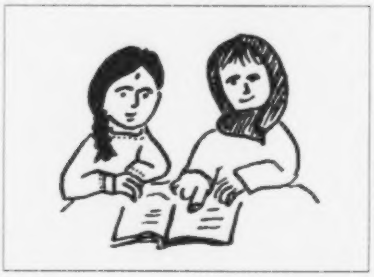
Student representative – A student chosen by other students to speak up for them and say what they want.



Student review – Looking back at what a student has done and learnt.

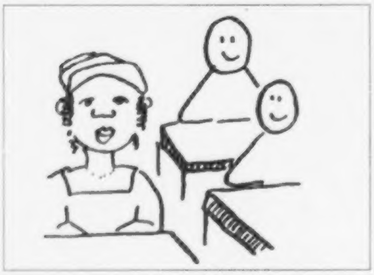


Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties – Students who need help with most things that they do.

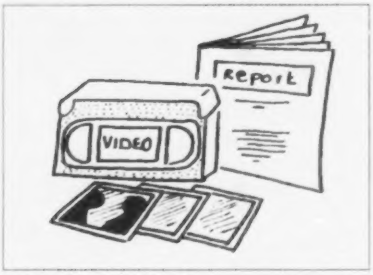


Support – Different kinds of help to do things.

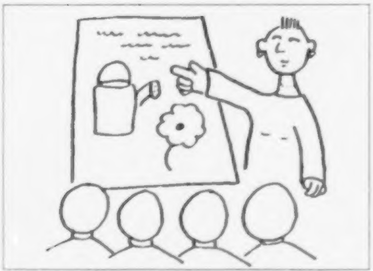
Word Bank



Taster course - A short course to give you a taste of a subject.



Teaching materials - Books, videos, tapes or pictures that a teacher uses.



Vocational skills - Skills that can help you get a job.

Volunteer - A person who offers to help out.

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